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# Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

## 5766th meeting

Tuesday, 23 October 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

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| *President*: | Mr. Osei-Adjei | (Ghana) |
| *Members*: | Belgium | Mr. Chevalier |
| | China | Mr. Liu Zhenmin |
| | Congo | Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro |
| | France | Mr. Lacroix |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Pratomo |
| | Italy | Mr. Spatafora |
| | Panama | Mr. Arias |
| | Peru | Mr. Chávez |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Nasser |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Rogachev |
| | Slovakia | Ms. Algayerová |
| | South Africa | Mr. Kumalo |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Ms. Pierce |
| | United States of America | Mr. Wolff |

## Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

## Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

## Women and peace and security

### Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

### Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

**The President**: I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Egypt, El Salvador, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Guinea, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Mexico, Myanmar, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Spain, the Sudan, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates, Viet Nam and Zambia, in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*At the invitation of the President, the representatives of the aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.*

**The President**: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, the Security Council has extended invitations under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; and Ms. Joanne Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/567, containing the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security.

I should also like to draw attention to document S/2007/598, which contains a letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana, transmitting a concept paper on the subject of this meeting; and document S/2007/607, which contains a letter dated 17 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa, transmitting the Report on the Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice.

I welcome the participation of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, at this meeting and invite him to take the floor.

**The Secretary-General**: I am honoured to address the Council for the first time as Secretary-General on the vital subject of women and peace and security. We have gathered to discuss the implementation of a landmark resolution. Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), seven years ago, Member States have made significant progress. More and more, women are participating in mediating and negotiating peace, in searching for justice, in fostering reconciliation, in supporting disarmament and demobilization and in shaping development policies and rebuilding institutions.

More and more, the Security Council is ensuring that peace processes empower women and advance gender equality. More and more, United Nations entities are working closely and actively with Governments and women's organizations, including through the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

But there is so much left to do, both for the United Nations and for Member States. More countries in conflict or post-conflict situations need to establish their own national action plans. They need to take greater ownership of programmes and priorities in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). They need to identify the capacity-building and the technical and financial support needed to scale up programmes for implementation, and they need to strengthen approaches to monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

For our part, we in the United Nations system must take a more evenly coordinated approach than we have done so far. We need to work better with Governments to establish truly joint programmes driven by national priorities. We need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of United Nations entities at the country level. We need to work better as a team, so as to give countries access to a common entry point.

And we need to appoint more women in leadership positions in our peace operations around the world. I am delighted that Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj of Denmark has agreed to serve as my Special Representative for Liberia. She will be heading one of our biggest peacekeeping missions, and I know she will provide a shining example of the kind of qualities we need in our leaders in the field.

Violence against women has reached hideous and pandemic proportions in some societies attempting to recover from conflict. Together, all of us need to strengthen our collective and individual responses to it. That is essential if we are to reverse the damage done by conflict and to build more inclusive, accountable and cohesive societies, underpinned by viable democratic institutions.

Earlier this year, I urged the Security Council to establish a mechanism dedicated to monitoring violence against women and girls within the framework of resolution 1325 (2000). I reiterate that call today. I also encourage Member States to actively consider proposals to strengthen the Organization's gender architecture, as presented by the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence. I believe we could significantly advance our cause by replacing several current structures with one dynamic United Nations entity. Such a new body should be able to call on all of the United Nations system's resources in the work to empower women and realize gender equality worldwide. It should mobilize forces of change at the global level and inspire enhanced results at the country level.

We all have a collective role and responsibility in accelerating the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) —the Security Council, Member States, the United Nations system, other international and regional actors and civil society. On this anniversary of its adoption, let us rededicate ourselves to that mission.

**The President**: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement. I understand that he has to proceed to the General Assembly for the meeting on financing for development.

I now give the floor to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

**Mr. Guéhenno**: I am very pleased to be able to brief the Council once again at this year's open debate on resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security.

In 2007, we have seen a number of significant advances in the contribution of women to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. Some of those advances have taken place in countries in which peacekeeping operations are deployed and also represent initiatives in how the United Nations goes about peacekeeping. For instance, in Haiti's municipal election this year, 25 women were elected mayors, as compared to six in 2000. That was due, in part, to the collaboration of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti with national partners to provide coaching for female candidates. In turn, January saw the deployment, for the first time, of an all-female police contingent to a United Nations peacekeeping operation, when an Indian formed police unit took up duties with the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) also continued to take steps to implement resolution 1325 (2000) in the past year. Last November, DPKO adopted a policy directive on gender equality in United Nations peacekeeping operations that obliges all uniformed and civilian staff to ensure the equal participation of women, men, girls and boys in all peacekeeping activities. DPKO and the Department of Field Support are now translating that policy into action, including through the development of initiatives such as guidelines for political affairs officers on how to mainstream gender in their work.

Both Departments at Headquarters continue to oversee the joint DPKO-Department of Field Support action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) through the interdepartmental task force on gender. Such task forces are also being replicated in the missions, with the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) having most recently re-established its gender task force in August, in order to further strengthen its gender mainstreaming across all sections of the mission.

The gender team at Headquarters has been bolstered through the recent realignment process. That included the upgrading of the post of gender adviser to the P-5 level, as a reflection of the skills and experience required to lead the team's work in backstopping and providing policy advice to the field and all divisions and offices within DPKO and the Department of Field Support.

Similarly, as I have mentioned to the Council before, we are committed to increasing the number of women serving in the field in civilian leadership positions and in operational military and police roles. The Secretariat has therefore taken concrete steps to strengthen its capacity to identify suitably qualified senior women, including through the establishment within the Department of Field Support of a small dedicated capacity focused on senior leadership appointments.

Since February, the number of women serving in senior civilian positions has increased by almost 40 per cent. As the Council is aware, last week, Ms. Margrethe Løj was appointed as Special Representative of the Secretary-General to lead the United Nations Mission in Liberia, along with Ms. Henrietta Mensah-Bonsu as Deputy for Operations and the Rule of Law. Female deputy heads of Mission were also recently appointed in the Sudan — where, Ms. Ameerah Haq was named the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator — and in Burundi, where Ms. Bintou Keita was appointed as the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General. I am particularly pleased at the appointment of Commissioner Agatha Lele as Senior Police Adviser in Burundi. I should also like to draw the attention of the Council to the composition of the new standing police capacity, nearly 25 per cent of which is female.

I recognize that we still have far to go in expanding the role and contribution of women in our operations. Nonetheless, the momentum towards achieving greater balance is building. I again urge Member States to work closely with us in putting forward suitably qualified female candidates ready and willing to serve in peacekeeping operations.

Most importantly, in the context of this debate, I would like to reiterate our ongoing implementation of zero tolerance for sexual exploitation and abuse that may have been committed by United Nations personnel. We have continued to take significant measures and have deployed additional resources to address sexual exploitation. There are currently several related policies before the General Assembly for consideration, including one on assistance to the victims of alleged abuses by United Nations personnel. In addition, earlier this year, DPKO adopted a welfare and recreation policy. It has also provided for guidance on the design and implementation of welfare and recreation measures and facilities to improve the wellness and the working and living conditions of all United Nations peacekeeping personnel.

The theme of today's debate is "Towards coherent and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2005)". In the past seven years our strategy has been to focus on the implementation of the individual parts of the resolution. To that end, we have indeed made progress in the implementation of our responsibilities. I would suggest, however, that it is time to review that fragmented and disparate approach to the implementation of the resolution. We know that resolving conflict requires a multifaceted and interlinked approach. If we are therefore to empower women in that process, our efforts will also have to be integrated. Coherent and effective implementation first requires that we more fully understand the relationship between protection and empowerment in all their aspects, as set forth in the resolution, and that we understand how that affects the role and contribution of women to the maintenance of peace and security. Strategies must thereafter be developed that incorporate a range of mutually reinforcing and coordinated activities aimed at the full implementation of the resolution.

If we look, for example, at the range of interventions necessary to address rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations, it becomes clear how pressing is the need for such a concerted and integrated approach.

Though DPKO is committed to combating sexual violence, we can start to truly address it in the field only with the help of the national authorities, the United Nations country team, and bilateral and non-governmental organization partners. The need for a truly United Nations-wide approach to that underscores the need for a strengthened United Nations gender architecture, as recommended by the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence.

While rape is used as a weapon of war in situations such as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, addressing that war crime requires going beyond political compromise and power- and resource-sharing agreements. Instead, combating rape and other forms of sexual violence calls for concerted, robust and ongoing action on the part of national actors and the international community alike at every level of engagement.

(*spoke in French*)

Sitting here today, I wish to stress that a first element of an effective strategy is the importance that the Security Council attaches to both understanding the impact of sexual violence on the maintenance of peace and security and to ensuring that the mandates and resources given to peacekeeping missions take into account the tragic situations faced by women and girls who suffer in conflicts and that they provide for the protection of civilians, including the special needs of women and girls.

The second element of an effective strategy is the political leadership of the United Nations, through the special representatives of the Secretary-General on the ground, in eliminating sexual violence. I have no doubt that, with the backing of the Council and interested Member States, special representatives can play a very important and decisive role in their advocacy, dialogue and good offices with the host countries and Governments concerned.

Thirdly, our missions can play a key role in providing preventive physical protection, for example, through their daily patrols. Such actions should be coordinated with preventive and victim's assistance programmes, including those carried out by other mission components, such as the United Nations country team, national actors and non-governmental organizations. In some locations in which we are deployed, such modest patrols can make the difference between life and death and act as a deterrent to rape, abductions and other forms of torture. At the same time, I know that we should not overstate the protection we can provide and that, even where each person protected represents a victory over the horror of sexual violence, we must be aware that the protection we offer will always be limited. When I think of our future deployment to Darfur, I am well aware that the reinforcement of troops there and the deployment of Blue Berets alone will not bring an end to sexual violence and the terrible crime of rape, given the extent of the territory to be covered, and that we will have to take action on all fronts in the fight against sexual violence and abuse. We cannot rely exclusively on military protection.

The fourth element of an effective and comprehensive strategy is the role our missions can play in facilitating and assisting national efforts to reform institutionally discriminatory structures, including rule of law institutions and the legal framework, in States where we have a presence. Such efforts appropriately reflect the impact of such structures in perpetuating sexual violence by ignoring them. In addition, those efforts underscore the fact that a coherent strategy to combat sexual violence must incorporate a thoughtful understanding of sexual violence in conflicts. If there is no such understanding of the problem, there can be no effective campaign against it. It is therefore a question of addressing the issue both in the short term and in the long term if we truly seek to resolve it.

As part of our efforts to address discrimination against women, we must clearly stress the assignment of women to senior civilian positions, as I noted, as well as to military and policing posts, so as to encourage local women in the countries where we are deployed to assume lead roles and to promote the development of a non-discriminatory system once the mission leaves. One example I would note is that the Liberian National Police received three times the usual number of female applicants in the month following the deployment of the Indian all-female police contingent to which I referred earlier.

More women in a police force must be accompanied by a strategy to improve policing as a service equally accessible to women. That in turn requires laws that incorporate women's rights and a judicial system accessible to victims of sexual violence. While it is the national Government's responsibility to ensure such accessibility, our missions have a role to play — as defined in their mandates — in monitoring remaining obstacles to women's access and in developing capacity-building programmes for human rights and judicial institutions.

(*spoke in English*)

Combating sexual violence requires a multiplicity of actors carrying out a multiplicity of actions in coordination and in coherence. I would urge that this approach be applied across the range of actions envisaged in resolution 1325 (2000). If we are to be effective in implementing that resolution, it is crucial that we share a common understanding of the factors that affect the role of women and their capacity to contribute to the maintenance of peace and security. We must also commit to identifying ways in which our different roles at the national and international levels can link together in an integrated and effective manner. Only together can we truly ensure the protection and empowerment of women in conflict.

**The President**: I now call on the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Rachel Mayanja.

**Ms. Mayanja**: I have the honour to introduce the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567). May I begin by expressing gratitude to you, Sir, for convening this crucially important meeting on a coherent and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Your presiding over this Council today is testimony to the deep commitment of Ghana to peace, gender equality and the empowerment of women worldwide.

The report before the Council contains the results of a second implementation review of the 2005-2007 United Nation System-wide Action Plan on resolution 1325 (2000) and an update of the Action Plan for 2008-2009.

The second implementation review conducted by my Office in consultation with United Nations entities noted new progress by the United Nations system in implementing resolution 1325 (2000), through an increased political commitment to gender equality, leadership and support by senior officials, strengthened or new policies and programmes, enhanced capacity-building on gender mainstreaming, improved advocacy and better engagement with Member States and civil society.

It also reaffirmed the findings of the first review of the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan, which was conducted in 2006 and was reported to the Council in document S/2006/770. The lack of such key elements as baseline data, performance indicators and timelines, which constitute an effective tool for measuring performance, negatively affected the monitoring, reporting and accountability processes. The updated Action Plan for 2008-2009 has been reconceptualized and transformed into a results-based programming, reporting and monitoring tool.

The proposed framework is rooted in intergovernmental mandates contained in resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent presidential statements on women and peace and security. It has three new main features: a sharpened focus through the consolidation of 12 areas into five thematic areas — prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery, and normative — to enable the United Nations system to promote inter-agency synergies within the thematic areas; a results-based management framework, including indicators to measure progress in achieving goals under each of the aforementioned thematic areas; and expected accomplishments and baseline data.

The development of a common set of indicators provides the basis for enhanced reporting, monitoring and accountability with respect to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by United Nations entities. The establishment of accountability procedures through the utilization of common standards is central to a coherent and efficient implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the United Nations. Where there is accountability, we will make progress; where there is none, we will underperform.

It is imperative for international organizations, national Governments and civil society to work together to identify priorities and to develop a practical approach to implementation strategies on women and peace and security at the national level. The challenges are many and continue to defeat the best efforts of Member States, United Nations entities and civil society in the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Member States play a critical role in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at the national and local levels. As national Governments shape and contribute to peacemaking, peacekeeping and rebuilding efforts and to conflict prevention, their commitment to women and peace and security enhances women's empowerment in survival and reconstruction efforts — or their inaction leaves existing structures of discrimination, poverty and violence unchanged.

In that connection, I wish to pay a special tribute to the Government of India for sending an all-women police contingent to the United Nations Mission in Liberia, as we heard this morning from Mr. Guéhenno. As role models for the women of Liberia, they have contributed in no small measure to the substantial enrolment of Liberian women in the Liberian police. National action plans and strategies provide a catalyst for ensuring that these commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment are effectively translated into domestic and foreign policies.

The United Nations system, other multilateral institutions and international partners should, in turn, be held accountable for supporting nationally owned plans and strategies and for making sure that they meet international standards and norms. Once these are in place, the support provided by the United Nations and the partners should align with national plans, priorities and approaches.

Resolution 1325 (2000) is primarily about how to make this world safe for women's and girls' equal participation in matters of peace and security. Determined action to eradicate gender-based violence will be required to enable the achievement of those goals. Impunity for perpetrators and insufficient response to the needs of survivors are morally reprehensible and unacceptable. Sexual violence in conflict, particularly rape, should be named for what it is: not a private act or the unfortunate misbehaviour of a renegade soldier, but aggression, torture, war crime and genocide.

The Security Council has done much to place the issue of sexual violence in conflict on the global policy agenda, and has strongly condemned it. However, despite the Council's repeated condemnation of all acts of gender-based violence and its demands to all parties to conflict for the immediate cessation of such acts, sexual violence remains pervasive. If the situation is not addressed now, and with urgency, thousands of women and girls will continue to die, and tens of millions more will be sexually brutalized, traumatized, tormented, stigmatized and ostracized.

I firmly believe that we are at a moment in history when the world should finally be ready to alter the course of human development and renounce all forms of violence by decisively accepting the responsibility to stamp them out. Today, the Council can help accelerate that shift by establishing a dedicated mechanism to monitor the situation of women and girls in conflict situations and hold parties to conflicts accountable for sexual and gender-based violence.

I urge all Governments, parliaments, international organizations and civil society to join the worldwide campaign on violence against women and girls to be launched by the Secretary-General later this year, to build and sustain global political commitment and action to prevent and respond to gender-based violence. Only by acting together can we create more equal relationships and more peaceful societies.

**The President**: I thank Ms. Mayanja for her statement.

I now give the floor to the Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, Ms. Joanne Sandler.

**Ms. Sandler**: On behalf of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), I am honoured to address the Security Council on the important issue of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

As the Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno and Ms. Mayanja have noted, it is clear that our collective commitment to moving that resolution forward requires significant strengthening. As they have also noted, there is progress on which to build. Gender advisers have been placed in most integrated missions, and gender-sensitive action plans have been formulated in security and humanitarian areas of United Nations work. Security Council members now regularly meet with women's groups and networks on their trips to conflict-affected countries. Member States are making efforts to increase the numbers of women among peacekeepers and police. The verdicts announced by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in July showed that war crimes against women and girls could be successfully and fully prosecuted.

But the real measure of effective implementation is not the setting up of systems, plans and processes. The measure is women's participation in and contribution to more sustainable peace agreements and post-conflict reconstruction strategies. The measure is better protection of women and girls in today's conflict zones.

UNIFEM supports the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in over 30 countries, building on a vast range of partnerships with Member States, United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations and women's networks. Allow me to present some insights from our experience.

While there are positive exceptions, women's access to peace processes has been highly uneven. In the past year, UNIFEM, in partnership with many United Nations and non-governmental organizations, has supported women's networks in Uganda, Kosovo, Nepal and the Middle East to build capacities and intensify their lobbying for inclusion in peace negotiations. In many cases, women are building dialogue across lines of conflict and have much to contribute about aspects of sustainable peace that would otherwise be neglected. But there remain too few examples of structured access for women to peace talks. Despite the promises of resolution 1325 (2000), peace tables remain the province of those who made the conflict rather than those who have the greatest motivation to end it.

In countries emerging from conflict, the numbers of women participating in elections are high — a remarkable testament to women's eagerness to participate in post-conflict decision-making, in spite of the gender-based violence that so many women encounter in daring to run for office. The numbers of women winning those contests vary according to whether electoral systems embrace special temporary measures as mandated by the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The strongest examples of the positive impact of those measures come from Rwanda, where women won 49 per cent of Assembly seats in the 2003 election, and Burundi, where they won 30.5 per cent in the 2005 elections. Where such measures have not been adopted or have been inconsistently applied, proportions of national assembly seats won by women have been disappointing.

Perhaps our greatest collective challenge, however, is our ability to use resolution 1325 (2000) to meaningfully address sexual violence as a method of warfare. Current media reports highlight the horrific extent of sexual violence in conflicts around the world. Even so, what gets reported is only the tip of the iceberg, as the Council recently heard from the Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mr. John Holmes.

Resolution 1325 (2000) calls on us to take action against sexual violence in conflict. UNIFEM has joined with 11 other United Nations entities in setting up United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. United Nations Action is providing strategic and technical support to United Nations integrated missions and United Nations country teams to step up their responses. It is seeking to build global awareness of the extent and impact of sexual violence in present-day conflicts and advocating for more effective responses from international and regional security institutions in conflict situations.

Vigilance and action are needed to send an irrevocable message that sexual violence must be prevented, that impunity for perpetrators is unacceptable and that providing services to survivors of such violence is the highest priority.

The days in October when the Security Council turns its full attention to the issues of women, peace and security and the presidential statements that the Security Council issues, all add up to a message of hope for women whose unique experiences of war and armed conflict has for too long been ignored.

Given the enormity of the agenda of resolution 1325 (2000) and the need to step up its implementation to contribute to greater security and protection for those who are most in need, I would end with two points that we hope the Council will give due consideration.

The first point is that the Security Council should consider calling for more holistic and concerted action by Member States and regional organizations, with United Nations system support, to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence. That means building on the excellent points made by Mr. Guéhenno and stepping up the global response in the following three key areas: first, the expansion of services for survivors, including provision of health services to treat HIV infection and the many forms of psychological and physical trauma that women and girls endure; second, focusing on transitional justice systems to build capacity to prosecute perpetrators; and third, above all, finding means to prevent the perpetration of sexual violence by ensuring that peacekeeping operations make life safe for women and girls.

The second point is that the Council should consider calling for more detailed reporting on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and enhance its own capacity to monitor gaps and achievements in its implementation. We reiterate the Secretary-General's call for Member States to establish a Security Council mechanism to monitor national implementation.

The issue of women, peace and security is one for which there is a huge constituency. We at UNIFEM are at the Council's disposal to assist in turning the tide of history to meet the implementation challenge. Security and peace for women remains a necessary prerequisite to security and peace for all.

**The President**: I now give the floor to Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

**Ms. Torry**: I would like to thank the Security Council for the invitation and the honour to be here today. I am here on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, a coalition of international civil society organizations formed in 2000 to advocate for a Security Council resolution on women, peace and security. We continue today to advocate for full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Unfortunately, we are not at a point where we can say that implementation has been coherent and effective. We value the opportunity to discuss that as we mark the seventh year since the adoption of that resolution.

Seven years later, we come here to ask this question: what has the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) meant for the situation of women and girls in Sierra Leone, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in Liberia, in Burundi, in Côte d'Ivoire, in Afghanistan, in Haiti, in Timor-Leste and in all other situations on the agenda of the Security Council?

Seven years later, women and girls in situations of armed conflict continue to be subjected to widespread and systematic sexual violence. This is a matter of international peace and security.

Seven years later, women remain largely excluded from the very structures that make the decisions to sustain peace or to engage in conflict. They are still marginalized in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes. This is a matter of international peace and security.

Seven years later, the integration of resolution 1325 (2000) into the work of the Security Council remains inconsistent. This means that in the situation in Darfur, women are still struggling to be part of peace talks in Tripoli. This means that in the situation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, sexual violence continues unabated and with impunity. Greater efforts must be undertaken to end impunity and to prosecute those suspected of crimes against women, particularly sexual violence — not only in the States where the crimes occurred and the States of which the suspects are nationals, but also in other States where suspects may be found.

Seven years later, there are still no monitoring or accountability mechanisms to ensure the coherent and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). This is a matter of international peace and security.

We note the progress that has been made and that has been mentioned by other speakers here this morning. We would like to focus on the role of the Security Council in driving progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

It does make a difference when the Security Council integrates resolution 1325 (2000) into its work. For instance, in the June 2006 mission to the Sudan led by the United Kingdom, Council members met with women's groups and gender experts in both Khartoum and Darfur. Two months later, on 31 August 2006, the Security Council issued resolution 1706 (2006), which both invokes resolution 1325 (2000) and contains useful gender-specific language.

Resolutions need to contain such language. However, where mission mandates contain adequate language on the integration of a gender perspective or women's human rights, too often the gender mandate is not reflected in the directives, guidance, terms of reference and incentive structures for mission staff, including the Special Representative.

Mandates also need to contain standard provisions for regular and adequate monitoring of and reporting on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the field missions. Reporting is needed on concrete and specific issues that address the following questions: what is the status of women's participation in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security? What is being done to ensure that women are able to effectively participate in elections? What work is being done with national women's machineries in regard to matters of security?

As the situation stands, some field missions do have a mandate to monitor and report on, for example, grave violations of human rights, but the data and trends regarding many violations, such as sexual violence, are still lacking. Reports need to provide a picture of the security situation in regard to women, especially the violence that affects their everyday lives.

Strong accountability mechanisms are imperative to drive and to support timely and systematic implementation. Such a mechanism would help to address inconsistency in invoking resolution 1325 (2000) in the directives from the Council to the field and inadequate monitoring and reporting on implementation by field missions — particularly on violations of human rights, such as sexual violence.

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security respectfully urges the Council to consider how it could provide more effective monitoring and reporting on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including through the establishment of a focal point and an expert-level working group, with appropriate leadership to ensure its active engagement with all aspects of the work of the Council.

We would like to thank members for their attention and to end with a quotation from Ms. Barbara Bangura of Sierra Leone, who spoke in an Arria-formula meeting in October 2006. She said that

> "women rely considerably on the guidance and assistance that the United Nations, in its many forms, provides. Resolution 1325 (2000) can only be successful if the Security Council is proactive in the use of resolution 1325 (2000) in its work. As such, the onus is on you here in New York to cast your light on the path we follow. Our failure is your failure; our successes, your successes."

**The President**: In accordance with the understanding reached among Council members, I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to not more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate their texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I invite Her Excellency Ms. Olga Algayerová, State Secretary of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and First Deputy Foreign Minister of the Slovak Republic, to take the floor.

**Ms. Algayerová** (Slovakia): First of all, I would like to express my delegation's gratitude to the briefers for their presentations and to the Ghanaian presidency for organizing this important debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

Slovakia fully associates itself with the statement to be delivered later by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

Slovakia strongly supports the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which represents a concrete and effective tool for the promotion and protection of the rights of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. The active and equal participation of women in conflict prevention, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, including in peace and reconciliation efforts, represents the best way to eliminate gender-based violence, sexual abuse and all other forms of violence against women in conflict situations. Women's empowerment plays a critical role in peace and security processes.

In this respect, we welcome the second follow-up report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) on the implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan for 2005-2007, as well as the proposed further actions for the period 2008-2009. We are pleased with the reported progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on a truly system-wide scale. However, we are very well aware that there is still much to be done.

The mainstreaming of the gender perspective in conflict prevention, including the development of gender-sensitive early warning mechanisms, increased participation by women in peacekeeping operations and decision-making and gender training for all staff, have been promoted by action plans and other important initiatives within United Nations entities, such as the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Food Programme (WFP).

An appropriate presence of women and gender training in armed forces, including peacekeeping forces, have a clear and positive effect on the behaviour of troops and on the actual conduct of their duty. Therefore, the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) are fully relevant for any security sector reform plan. In this context, we welcome activities linked with the promotion of women's participation in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the development of specific action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the field missions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

We also very much appreciate the work of UNICEF, which has provided gender training for 500 staff members of the international organizations based in the Sudan, and which, in cooperation with Save the Children, has provided gender training for 3,300 military observers, protection forces and civilian police officers in Darfur. I would also mention the training provided by OHCHR to military and police personnel deployed in peacekeeping operations. The activities of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe are also commendable in this area.

Gender perspective has also been mainstreamed in some humanitarian assistance programmes, as well as in the areas of post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. In those areas, for example, the World Food Programme assisted States in gender mainstreaming in food security programmes and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda provided gender training for investigators and legal personnel, establishing gender-sensitive policies and mechanisms to coordinate the rehabilitation of witnesses.

The special needs of women and girls have been reflected in the majority of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes. In Liberia, for example, 22,370 women and 2,440 girls out of some 100,000 ex-combatants were disarmed, demobilized and reintegrated into the community. The efforts of UNICEF and non-governmental organizations led to the release of over 1,000 women and girls from armed forces in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of over 800 girls in Sri Lanka.

Despite the tangible progress achieved in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the level of the United Nations system, we remain extremely concerned about the actual situation of women and girls in conflict situations, where they continue to face all possible forms of violence. I will not go into the horrible details and recall the stories of women and girls heard by the Council during the recent Arria-formula meeting organized by France. Our particular concerns are linked with rape and other forms of sexual violence on an enormous scale, which are often systematically used as a tool of war.

Slovakia strongly condemns such crimes and supports the use of all available means to put an end to the impunity of perpetrators. In that respect, we also reiterate our full support for the zero-tolerance policy with respect to crimes committed by United Nations personnel.

We believe that national authorities and the whole international community must respond more effectively to widespread sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, and that their responses need to be based on reliable information. Slovakia therefore fully supports the idea of establishing a comprehensive and effective monitoring and reporting mechanism that will help to identify the victims, patterns, real scale and perpetrators of sexual violence in the context of armed conflicts. We firmly believe that more detailed and focused monitoring could lead to more effective measures by Governments, the United Nations system, civil society and all other actors working on the ground.

**The President**: I invite His Excellency Mr. Pierre Chevalier, Special Envoy of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium, to take the floor.

**Mr. Chevalier** (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): As we speak — at this very moment — thousands of women are victims of sexual violence in its most atrocious forms. Who among us has not reacted with horror when reading the reports on the sexual violence committed against women in the Kivus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, or in the Sudan? Therefore, some might wonder: what is the point of another debate in these hushed halls of the United Nations? We have the duty to answer that question by going beyond statements and reaffirming our political commitment to combating violence against women, using all means at our disposal. This public debate on strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, is thus particularly timely, because it is urgent to act. Therefore, I would like to warmly thank the presidency for having organized this debate.

Nearly seven years ago, the Security Council adopted its ground-breaking resolution on women and peace and security. Today, unfortunately, we must note that the issues and the challenges posed remain fully relevant. Despite the efforts of the United Nations system, described in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567), and despite efforts on all our part, the resolution's objectives have not been attained.

My country is particularly concerned about the persistent scourge of gender-based acts of violence, particularly in armed conflicts. The momentum unleashed by resolution 1325 (2000) has helped to accelerate the raising of awareness about that scourge. A doctrine against this type of crime is in the process of being developed. Various United Nations forums as well as Member States have contributed to that effort. Here, I should like to recall the Brussels Call to Action to Address Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond.

But we need more than awareness-raising if we are to implement the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) in that regard. Belgium calls for closer Security Council follow-up and for the development of tools to that end. Indeed, the Council should have at its disposal a horizontal report on gender-based acts of violence in the armed conflicts on its agenda. Such a report should draw on all sources available within the United Nations system and elsewhere. The experience acquired in combating the use of child soldiers has shown us the importance of this type of instrument. Such a report should also enable us to define better-targeted and far more effective actions.

Strengthening the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in its entirety is a collective duty. The Security Council can and must do more when it defines the mandates of peacekeeping missions. In general terms, it must take greater account of the situation of women in the conflict in question. In fact, depending on the case, women can be not only potential victims, but also major actors in the political or socio-economic areas, or even combatants — actors in the conflict. Women continue to be underrepresented in peace and reconstruction processes.

That preliminary analysis must be translated into better-defined mandates, in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000). Clearer mandates will facilitate follow-up by peacekeeping missions on issues related to resolution 1325 (2000) on the ground and will facilitate reporting to the Security Council. Moreover, the need to mainstream the gender perspective in peacekeeping mandates applies not only to United Nations peacekeeping missions, but also to the peacekeeping missions of regional organizations such as the European Union and the African Union.

As you yourself, Mr. President, emphasized in your invitation to this debate, the role and the responsibility of Member States in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be overestimated. At the national level, Belgium has prepared a charter for its armed forces to promote the equality of women and men; in particular, it takes into account the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) within the framework of operations conducted abroad. Training on the gender perspective is an integral part of preparing troops who will take part in a mission.

Furthermore, resolution 1325 (2000) now serves as a point of reference for the identification of assistance projects eligible for financial support from Belgium. The formulation of a national plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is also under way.

Today's debate reminds us once again that action to meet these challenges goes beyond the Security Council's sphere of action. It is therefore important that all United Nations forums shoulder their responsibility to strengthen their implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In that context, we welcome the debate planned in the Commission on the Status of Women at its forthcoming session, to be held in 2008.

In conclusion, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) represents an extremely complex challenge. The Security Council must show the way forward. We believe it is urgent to strengthen its capacity to follow up on problems related to gender-based acts of violence in armed conflict. To that end, the Council must have better-targeted reporting at its disposal.

**The President**: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Eddy Pratomo, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Director General for Legal Affairs and International Treaties of Indonesia.

**Mr. Pratomo** (Indonesia): Let me first express my appreciation to the delegation of Ghana for convening this debate on women and peace and security. My delegation is certain that, under the able stewardship of Foreign Minister Akwesi Osei-Adjei, the Council will arrive at a successful outcome.

We have come some distance since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), in 2000. The plight of women in armed conflict has been publicized, and new paths of leadership have been forged by women in the political environment, in peacekeeping and in peacebuilding. However, action on behalf of women is needed to close the gap between our political pledges and the current reality of empowering women in situations of armed conflict, in order to attain peace and security.

While war is a great equalizer in terms of suffering, the plight of women in conflict situations is compounded by the physical displacement experienced in war, the environmental hazards of war and sexual crimes such as rape, which are attendant to war. In many situations of armed conflict, women are already marginalized in the political process, and the conflict situation makes that reality even more apparent.

We need to ensure that fair treatment and protection of women are incorporated into all phases of peace processes. A negotiation that satisfies the needs of the parties requires that all relevant actors be involved, irrespective of their gender. Women are habitually underrepresented and bring additional interests and roles to bear, including as victims and witnesses, which need to be integrated into any peace process. Including women may have the added benefit of expanding the palette of options for successful negotiation by increasing the number of issues at stake and the subsequent bargaining leverage. A key issue is the identification and selection of women who can participate in peace negotiations. Like their male counterparts, female participants should be linked to the greater community and should have a representative stake in the outcome.

In addition to considering the phases of conflict and ceasefire agreements, we need to consider how the interests and needs of women can be addressed in the post-conflict peace process and in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. Political leaders need to become sensitized to existing problems by listening directly to victims and witnesses and by giving them an opportunity to share their difficulties. We should also envisage how the United Nations system might be able to engage in remediation efforts in conjunction with relevant civil society organizations.

Grass-roots efforts can be employed. In many countries and communities, there are local conflict resolution procedures and women's peace initiatives that might be utilized in order to gain a peace that is most compatible with the situation in a given country. We should seek to utilize mechanisms that have worked for the community and have worked in the past in efforts to achieve a peaceful resolution. Resolution 1325 (2000) provides a strong impetus, but it is really only a guideline for further strengthening our efforts to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We need to consider homegrown initiatives that develop within national and regional contexts and to utilize local wisdom and capacity.

To encourage the development and dissemination of best practices, regional organizations can be involved in conducting workshops on issues relative to women in armed conflict, peace processes and peacebuilding. Moreover, we support the development of a database of good practices to further our efforts. This undertaking can be accelerated in the form of a comprehensive knowledge and information management system that can be instituted. Such a method could include a demographic database of shifting gender distribution and political involvement.

Concomitant with the role of national strategies and regional initiatives, civil society organizations can play an important role in helping to enable women in conflict environments. Their efforts have benefited women in the population and have contributed to peace. They can play an invaluable role in campaigns to raise awareness about women's issues, including the participation of women in peacekeeping.

Women represent over half the world's population today, and their presence in political processes in many parts of the world is growing. But they are underrepresented in the phases of conflict resolution and peace and security in places where conflict persists. Men still are dominant in these processes, with the result that women are often disenfranchised.

Resolution 1325 (2000) charts a course to improving the lot of women in armed conflict situations. It is only the beginning of a journey. It should not discourage continued thinking regarding new and creative ways to empower women and raise their voices to a higher plane. Lastly, we consider it pertinent that the Council should continue to cooperate more closely with other relevant United Nations organs in this endeavour.

**Mr. Rogachev** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Resolution 1325 (2000) remains significant as a guideline in determining the role of women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, in post-conflict reconstruction and in assessing the situation regarding the protection of women's rights in conflicts. It is important that the work of the Security Council for its implementation should focus on tasks relating to the Council's mandate, and not duplicate the activities of other United Nations bodies, including the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women.

An artificial connection between gender questions and the whole gamut of questions under the exclusive purview of the Security Council would lead to imbalance in terms of system-wide coherence and would impede the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). On the other hand, the Council cannot focus on sexual violence only when it occurs during armed conflict. We must make efforts to find a balanced approach to this problem within the Security Council, bearing in mind its tasks and competence under the Charter of the United Nations. That has to do, also, with the fact that we see in this problem and other topics an attempt to promote the concept of responsibility to protect within the Security Council, an issue which under the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document is something that first requires discussion within the General Assembly.

In terms of its goals under the Charter, the focus of the Council should be primarily on the most acute and major armed conflicts, and obviously not just in Africa. We believe that the United Nations as a whole should give priority to responding to massive and systematic violence against women. That goal will be promoted by strengthening the gender component in reports of the Secretary-General to the Security Council dealing with specific situations, and that could be a new specific step in the Council's work furthering this objective.

We also should not, we believe, reduce the scope of this important resolution to the problem of sexual violence while ignoring other forms of violence against women, not even referring to other issues such as equal participation by women in peace processes, incorporating gender aspects in United Nations programmes and strategies, and so on. We believe that, as in the work on children and armed conflict, we should pay equal attention to all serious cases of violence against women and children, including murder and mutilation. Such crimes — including those resulting from acts of terrorism, indiscriminate or excessive use of force or unlawful actions by armed forces, including private defence contractors — require consistent attention from the international community.

The System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) for 2005-2007 has facilitated the implementation of the United Nations strategy on women and peace and security. Its implementation has contributed to enhancing national potential, that being a key condition for protecting the rights of women and encouraging their equal participation in peacebuilding. We agree with the conclusions of the Secretary-General contained in his report (S/2007/567) on the need to overcome the shortcomings in the implementation of this plan.

At the same time, we cannot agree with the recommendations on creating specialized machinery within the Security Council to monitor the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on a national level. We believe that that would simply exacerbate the problem of duplication and lack of coherence. Experience in similar plans has shown that it would not lead to real improvements in the field. What is needed is to enhance the effectiveness of existing machinery and not establish new bureaucratic structures, particularly at a time when the issue of the new gender architecture of the United Nations has not yet been resolved.

In this context, we are bewildered by the public statements made on the eve of this Security Council meeting by the Secretariat prejudging the Council's conclusions with respect to creating a monitoring mechanism. Generally speaking, we support the extension of the plan for 2008-2009, in order to further develop constructive coordination between the United Nations and interested States.

**Mr. Wolff** (United States of America): Mr. President, the United States would like to thank you and the Permanent Mission of Ghana for choosing to focus on the important topic of women and peace and security for this month's open debate. We welcome the Secretary-General's latest report and agree that important groundwork has been laid for a longer-term effort by the United Nations towards the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). However, much more needs to be done.

The important contribution women can and do make in decision-making to prevent conflict, mediate peace processes and assist in post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding must be recognized and endorsed at a national level. Failure to bring women into these processes in a meaningful way leaves a critical resource untapped and excludes a large segment, in many cases, a majority of the population. This undermines both the credibility and the sustainability of these processes.

The United States calls on all Member States to promote gender equality and a greater role for women in the prevention of conflict, peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction.

As part of this effort to incorporate women fully into international efforts to prevent and resolve conflicts, the United States strongly supports the appointment of women to senior positions throughout the United Nations system and, in particular, a special envoy or representative of the Secretary-General. In this regard, the United States especially welcomes the recent nomination of Ambassador Løj as the Secretary-General's new Special Representative for Liberia.

The United States calls on the Secretary-General as a matter of urgency to increase the number of women considered for United Nations special representative and envoy positions and encourages Member States to redouble their efforts to nominate women candidates for these positions.

One of the key challenges we face today is reducing the tragedy of violence against women and girls in areas afflicted by armed conflict. It is often women and children who face the most horrific consequences of conflict in the world today. Sexual violence against women is reprehensible in any context, but it is especially heinous when it is used by political or military leaders as a tool to achieve political or military objectives.

It is with this in mind that the United States and others have introduced a draft resolution in the Third Committee of the General Assembly entitled "Eliminating the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as instruments to achieve political or military objectives" (A/C.3/62/L.16). This draft resolution condemns the use by States and by non-State actors of rape, typically systematic mass rape, to achieve military or political objectives. This would be the first United Nations resolution to focus specifically on this particularly egregious form of violence against women. It calls for States to end impunity by prosecuting and punishing those who use rape as a military or political tool and to protect and support victims; and it calls for States, appropriate United Nations officers and agencies and civil society to develop and implement comprehensive strategies on prevention and prosecution of rape. We ask Member States to support and to consider sponsoring the text, which will be addressed under the Assembly's agenda item 63, on the advancement of women.

Given the special vulnerability of the civilian population during conflicts that threaten the peace and security of their nations, it is particularly abhorrent when those charged with restoring peace and stability become the perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children. The Council has addressed this issue in past statements, reiterating its condemnation of all acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by all categories of personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions and urging troop-contributing countries to take appropriate preventive action, including the conduct of pre-deployment awareness training and to take disciplinary and other action to ensure full accountability in cases of misconduct involving their personnel.

The United Nations, as we heard earlier this morning from Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, has made considerable and laudable efforts to enforce a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse by personnel assigned to United Nations peacekeeping operations and has made considerable progress in providing appropriate training, as well as improved oversight of conduct and discipline.

We underscore the need for all allegations to be investigated properly and for appropriate follow-up action to be taken.

**Mr. Arias** (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I first of all thank the delegation of Ghana for convening this meeting. I am grateful to the Secretary-General for his significant presentation and to Ms. Mayanja, Ms. Sandler, Ms. Torry and Mr. Guéhenno for their important briefings, which objectively describe the successes and challenges relating to women and peace and security and also in particular the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was an important milestone for this Organization. It recognizes, inter alia, the valuable contribution of women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, as well as in peacebuilding. Nonetheless, in spite of the progress made in the implementation of this resolution, a great deal remains to be done. This is why the Security Council, the Secretary-General and other United Nations forums must continue to support Member States in adopting policies and establishing national programmes and plans that are aimed at its implementation. The Organization must do likewise within its administration. In this context, Panama wishes to welcome the appointment of Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia.

As for the Republic of Panama, while we must not disregard progress made in the implementation of all the aspects of this resolution, it is equally true that today we are confronting situations that directly affect women and girls that require our immediate attention and action. Obviously, we refer to the persistent scourge of sexual violence in situations that are on the Security Council's agenda. Consideration of the reports from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Louise Arbour, as well as from the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, John Holmes, inter alia, oblige us to refer specifically to these situations in this debate.

The systematic rape of women and children who are simply going about their daily activities is only one segment of the challenge facing women in certain regions of the world. At the present time, the rise in the use of sexual violence against women as a tool of war has reached a truly alarming stage. In spite of its recurrence, the lack of public order and the situation of insecurity prevent State bodies from protecting women from being victims of this violence.

In the face of this problem, the Security Council and the entire Organization must reflect on more effective measures to prevent sexual violence in all cases and particularly in the aforementioned tragic situations. As part of its consideration, the Council could re-evaluate the effectiveness and the scope of the mandates of some peacekeeping operations, with a view to ensuring the presence of its components in these areas of repeated attacks. Furthermore, care of the victims must be part of the joint efforts of the Security Council and the rest of the Organization. Ensuring access to psychological, social and health support, including free and confidential HIV/AIDS screening and, where necessary, treatment, is a key part of this work. At the same time, little can be achieved without education of the people; and, therefore, States, with the needed support, must conduct awareness-raising campaigns on the subject of sexual violence.

Lastly, and as is universally agreed, justice is the main guarantor of human rights. The lack of the rule of law only results in a collapse of public order, in insecurity and in conflict. Consequently, the detention and prosecution of those guilty of using sexual violence as a tool of war is something that this body must emphasize repeatedly. In this context, we support the efforts of the International Criminal Court to prosecute those who are guilty of this crime against humanity.

The Security Council's capacity to react effectively to this challenge depends on the quality, credibility and relevance of the information it receives. More information on sexual violence with empirical data, broken down by gender, must form part of the reports considered by this Security Council. This will help us understand how and why this phenomenon exists. It will also help define more effective strategies to combat it. This is why the Republic of Panama hopes and trusts that, as of now, the Secretariat will include in its reports to the Council more details relating to this grave violation of the rights of women.

In conclusion, may I reiterate my own country's well-known position that in order to put an end to the cycle of violence against women, which exists both in peacetime and in wartime, it is necessary to promote, inter alia, women's active participation in all aspects of political, socio-economic and cultural life. This must be the ongoing commitment of our countries and of the United Nations system.

**Ms. Pierce** (United Kingdom): May I join others in thanking you in particular, Mr. President, for honouring us with your presence today and for choosing such an important theme for this debate. We are also pleased to be honoured by the presence of so many other ministers.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567) and for appearing here today. We also very much welcome what the Under-Secretary-General said about the work of the Secretariat on this important matter. We would like to extend our congratulations to them for what they have achieved.

It was also very good to be able to hear from the Special Adviser, the acting Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. We welcome them to the Council and congratulate them and their teams for the important strides they have made on these issues.

This is not a new issue, as anyone who is familiar with the Greek play *Lysistrata* — which means "she who disbands armies". The role of women in peace and security is a very old and distinguished one. It behoves us today to see how we can build on that.

The United Kingdom is committed to the key resolution 1325 (2000). We continue to promote its implementation at the United Nations and in the international community. As many speakers have noted, there has been progress in the seven years since its adoption, but much more remains to be done.

Women and children suffer disproportionately in armed conflict. They constitute the majority of all victims. The Security Council has a key role to play in providing for the protection of women from gender-based violence, including torture, rape, forced pregnancy, sexual slavery, prostitution and trafficking, which are all committed during conflict and continue in post-conflict situations. Conflict is the business of the Council.

The evidence from countries on the Council's agenda today shows how much remains to be done. There is continued sexual violence on a massive scale in the conflict-affected areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. UNICEF recently stated that 18,000 cases of rape were reported in three provinces alone. The cruelty of the sexual violence inflicted upon women and children, in particular as a weapon of war, is unspeakable. This is not a debate about the institutional niceties of whether the subject does or does not belong on the Council's agenda. This is a debate about protecting people who are suffering as a result of conflict.

The situation in Darfur continues to be characterized by gross and systematic violations of human rights and by breaches of international humanitarian law. That too is a matter for the Council.

In Burma, Mr. Pinheiro, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on human rights, has reported on the systematic sexual violence used by the military, police and border guards as part of the Government's anti-insurgency tactics.

The Council has a duty to listen to, but also to act upon, such reports. We welcomed the Arria Formula meeting hosted by the Mission of France earlier this month. It is imperative that the Security Council hears the often unpalatable testimonies of witnesses on the ground. We heard about public rape in front of families and communities, forced rape and incest between victims, the introduction of objects into victims' cavities, the pouring of melted rubber into women's vaginas, the shooting of women in the vagina and inducing abortion using sharp objects.

That sort of cruelty is something that concerns us all. Events such as the ones described in that Arria Formula meeting — on the situation of women in Darfur, Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — and the report of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to the Security Council in September regarding conditions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are an important part of the debate.

Much of what resolution 1325 (2000) deals with takes place at levels where Security Council resolutions are often not heard. But we do need to hear about such acts. Resolution 1325 (2000) must be used as recognized doctrine to inform the Council's deliberations; in turn, it must have impact on the ground. That can only be achieved by fully implementing it. The provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) and successive presidential statements thereto need to be translated more consistently from words into actions.

We support Minister Chevalier's call for resolutions mandating that peacekeeping missions ensure that that happens. We also welcome what Minister Pratomo said about the role of regional organizations and civil society. In addition, we welcome the updated United Nations system-wide Action Plan for 2008-2009, which we hope will promote greater coherence and awareness within the United Nations system while also promoting gender mainstreaming within peace-support operations. In that context, I would like to join other speakers in congratulating the Secretary-General on appointing Ellen Margrethe Løj his Special Representative for Liberia. She is an outstanding choice.

To encourage national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), Member States should be able to look to the United Nations for guidance and assistance in the production and ownership of national action plans. The Peacebuilding Commission can also contribute crucially by its development of peacebuilding strategies.

Violence against women is a crime in itself. It is an obstacle to long-term peace and security. Evidence shows that peace and security reconciliation processes are only sustainable when all actors in society are involved. We heard today of the need for the female voice to be heard at the Tripoli conference on Darfur, as part of a process of bringing in non-State actors. We would support that.

We also believe that, although the United Nations Secretariat has done some welcome work, there is more that can be done to enlist different parts of the Secretariat — for instance, UNIFEM and the United Nations System-wide Action Plan — so that they too can contribute to the reports that are presented to the Council and this issue can be given the weight it deserves.

The issue of sexual and gender-based violence against women is as much about perpetrators and tackling impunity as it is about victims. Those accused of such violations should be named, shamed and brought to fair trials. The Security Council will only limit its ability to ensure long-term peace and security in many of the countries on its agenda if it does not address gender-based violence.

I would like to turn to the draft presidential statement before the Council. The United Kingdom would like to thank your Mission, Mr. President, for its outstanding work in seeking to promote the agenda of resolution 1325 (2000), not only through today's debate but also through the draft statement that it has prepared. We and other delegations had hoped that the final draft could have addressed the current and growing concern in the apparent proliferation of sexual and gender-based violence within States that are currently on the agenda of the Security Council.

We are disappointed that consensus could not be reached on the proposal to request the Secretary-General to prepare a report within the next six months that focused on sexual violence in current countries in conflict. I think that is all the more disappointing given that the Secretary-General himself and the Special Adviser and other speakers have said that they would support such a report. Quite frankly, we find it astonishing that anyone could object to that on narrow institutional grounds. We believe that the debate has shown very clearly why that is the business of the Council. But we also support what Mr. Chevalier and Mr. Pratomo have said, namely, that this is not the exclusive business of the Council. There are other parts of the United Nations system that can, and should, deal with this issue. We look to those who do oppose additional reporting through the Security Council to lead and produce initiatives in other United Nations bodies, which we would be happy to support.

We also hope, however, that it will be possible to return to this issue within the context of the Security Council when we have the report on the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). A long-term solution to gender-based violence depends upon the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), with true gender mainstreaming and gender equality. We are committed to working together towards that goal, and to do justice to this landmark resolution.

**Mr. Liu Zhenmin** (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open debate and for presiding over it in person in New York. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567). I welcome his presence and statement at this meeting. I also wish to express my gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, Ms. Rachel Mayanja and Ms. Joanne Sandler for their statements.

This year marks the seventh anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). A milestone in the field of women, peace and security, that resolution has laid the foundation for cooperation by all parties concerned in this field. The Security Council has taken a lot of follow-up action to the resolution and the Member States concerned have also actively taken relevant measures pursuant to the resolution. Since the Secretary-General formulated the United Nations System-wide Action Plan in 2005, positive results have been achieved in the implementation of various aspects of the resolution over the past two years.

However, we need to take an objective view of the successes that have been achieved and the shortcomings that still exist. As stated by the Secretary-General in his report, various degrees of progress have been registered in such fields as conflict prevention and early warning, peacemaking and peacebuilding, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, the implementation of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, and the prevention of and response to sexual violence.

On the other hand, capacity-building at all levels still leaves much to be desired, the problem of inadequate funding remains prominent, and there is a lack of close coordination between international cooperation and national activities. Those challenges have compromised the effectiveness of the comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Security Council should further enhance the implementation of the resolution and advance comprehensive progress in all aspects of the issue of women, peace and security. In order to achieve that goal, all parties concerned should put special emphasis on the following tasks.

First, the Security Council can play a unique role in the field of women, peace and security, and various organs of the United Nations system should strengthen mutual coordination and cooperation, while working under their respective mandates. It is the broad common understanding of the international community that it is necessary to protect and empower women, safeguard their rights and interests, and achieve gender equality. That is an important undertaking which requires integrated action. The United Nations has adopted quite a number of instruments in this field. As the organ with the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council should work effectively within its terms of competence, focusing on conflict prevention, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and the Peacebuilding Commission have their respective mandates and roles in advancing women's rights and interests, and the work of the Security Council should not duplicate or seek to replace that of those organs.

Secondly, it is necessary to enhance the participation of women in all stages of a peace process and to acknowledge their status and role so as to lay a firm foundation for peacebuilding and the realization of lasting peace. Respect for and protection of women are manifestations of social civilization and progress, and necessary elements of a mature social system. Respect for and protection of women should be incorporated into a peace process from the beginning to the end. The special needs and concerns of women should be accommodated and their potentials and roles tapped. They should enjoy greater participation and decision-making power with institutional guarantees. In recent years, the Secretariat has taken many positive measures to increase the ratio of female senior officials and female heads and staff of peacekeeping missions. We hope to see such efforts continue.

Thirdly, countries concerned should be encouraged to formulate, on the basis of their specific circumstances, national plans of action or strategies to implement resolution 1325 (2000), with vigorous support from the United Nations and the international community. Resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be comprehensively implemented without national action. However, the countries that need to take implementation actions the most, especially those involved in or recently emerged from armed conflict, often lack implementing capabilities and are burdened by specific special situations and difficulties. The international community and donors should come forward with generous help and the United Nations should provide various kinds of assistance to give the Government and people of countries concerned full ownership and strengthen their capacity-building, and avoid acting in their place or imposing anything on them.

The Outcome Document of the World Summit emphasized that the progress of women is the progress of all humankind. That is equally true in the field of peace and security. The comprehensive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) represents an important guarantee for the realization of that goal. We support the Secretary-General in his ongoing efforts to implement the United Nations System-wide Action Plan. The Chinese Government has always attached importance to the protection of women's rights and interests and the empowerment of women.

**Mr. Al-Nasser** (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): Allow me at the outset to thank you, Sir, for your presence at this important meeting and to extend to the permanent mission of Ghana to the United Nations my sincere thanks for its thorough preparations for this open debate.

I would also like to extend my thanks to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women; Ms. Joanne Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women; and Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for their briefings today.

The State of Qatar firmly believes that women are key partners in all efforts towards and stages in the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security. It also believes in the priority of the ongoing work to integrate women into all peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations and in the development of national policies for the consolidation of peace in areas of armed conflict. The State of Qatar strongly condemns all sexual and physical abuse of women and girls in areas of armed conflict. The State of Qatar stresses the need to provide them with comprehensive protection and to take firm action against those who sexually abuse women and girls in areas of armed conflict, be they parties to the conflict or United Nations peacekeeping operations personnel, in order to put an end to impunity.

We have reviewed the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) for the years 2005-2007. In that regard, we commend the efforts and activities carried out by all the entities of the United Nations, which have made significant progress in many areas of the Plan. It is reassuring to note that the review process indicates an increase in the political commitment to gender equality, the empowerment of women in peace processes, and the strengthening of capacity-building, especially in the area of women's full participation in all stages of peace processes, including in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and in the development of new mechanisms for monitoring and reporting on the status of women and their contributions to peace processes.

With regard to addressing all forms of violence against women and children in armed conflict, including sexual violence, and to addressing the issue of impunity from prosecution for such crimes, we commend the efforts of United Nations entities in carrying out the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse committed by their personnel; in providing support to Member States in their efforts to align their national legal systems with the relevant international standards; and in cooperating in the area of national capacity-building in the fight against those crimes and against impunity. We also commend the Governments concerned for their cooperation, which is essential for the success of any plan intended to put an end to this phenomenon.

Despite the progress that has been made, many institutional and organizational challenges must still be addressed to achieve universal implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Governments of post-conflict countries and countries affected by conflict bear the primary responsibility for the implementation of that resolution. While such countries have established national mechanisms for the advancement of women, they need financial and technical support to ensure active participation by women in the formulation of policies and programmes relating to the establishment and consolidation of peace and security. In that respect, the Secretary-General has pointed out in his report the inadequate funding of gender-related projects in peace processes and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Overcoming these challenges does not require the creation of new mechanisms and bodies or the submission of new reports. That would entail a waste of money and effort that could be better spent to improve and strengthen existing mechanisms. With regard to monitoring and follow-up, the Secretary-General should include in his periodic reports to the Security Council on various of armed conflicts an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming the gender perspective in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions and data on all forms of violence against women and children, including killing and maiming and sexual violence committed by the parties to the conflict and by peacekeeping personnel. Those reports must also include best practices and lessons learned in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Turning to national implementation, the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) requires enhancing the capacity of the United Nations peace support, humanitarian and post-conflict reconstruction operations to backstop the efforts of Member States in strengthening their national capacities, in line with national objectives and the relevant international standards, to achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women in the area of peace and security, success in the fight against all forms of violence, especially violence against women and children, and the eradication of the culture of impunity. Success also requires paying special attention to countries emerging from conflict, which need financial and technical support in the preparation of national plans of action to implement resolution 1325 (2000). We commend the effort to take that objective into account in the formulation of the United Nations System-wide Plan of Action for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) for the period 2008-2009. We also stress the importance of continued financial and technical support, the lack of which could make the objective of achieving the global implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) elusive. We will support the draft presidential statement that is before the Security Council, which enjoys consensus.

**Mr. Lacroix** (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to start by thanking you, Mr. President, for taking the initiative to hold this public debate on women and peace and security. The French delegation appreciates your presence here with us.

I would like at the outset to recall that France fully aligns itself with the statement that will be made shortly by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Union.

The adoption, seven years ago, of resolution 1325 (2000) was recognition that the participation of women on an equal footing with men in society and in decision-making processes and the protection of women from violence and violations of their rights have an important impact on conflict prevention, on the course of conflicts and on post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction. It is thus not only legitimate but essential for the Security Council, in the context of its responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and complementing the actions pursued by other United Nations organs, to continue to concern itself with the situation of women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

A great deal has been done in seven years, especially in the United Nations system, to implement resolution 1325 (2000). The Security Council has integrated — not systematically enough, it must be recognized — the approach advocated in resolution 1325 (2000) in the mandates of peacekeeping operations and has tried to convince the parties themselves to integrate this perspective in peace processes. The Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes, each in its own area, have increased their activities to better protect women, ensure that their specific needs are taken into account in transition phases and involve them more in decision-making processes.

My delegation would like, in that connection, to warmly thank the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, and Ms. Joanne Sandler of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) for their respective contributions to the implementation of the resolution and for their statements in today's debate.

The report that the Secretary-General has submitted on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2007/567) reflects the profusion of initiatives to train personnel for peacekeeping operations, to rethink the organization of refugee camps in order to take into account women's specific needs, to support women who are victims of violence and to fight impunity.

Among those initiatives, I would like to draw attention to the one carried out by UNICEF and sponsored by France, which led to the adoption in February 2007 of the Paris Guidelines on the protection and reintegration of children associated with armed forces or armed groups. One of the fundamental underpinnings of the guidelines is to give more consideration to the specific needs of girls, including in all processes involving the demobilization and reintegration into the community of children who have been associated, in one way or another, with an armed group.

Should we thus consider that seven years of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) have met the expectations it raised? The answer is no.

When Mrs. Rama Yade, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs and Human Rights of the French Republic, came to New York on 1 October to chair, together with Mrs. Mary Robinson, an Arria-formula Security Council meeting on the question of women in conflicts in Africa, it was to awaken the consciences of Security Council members to that subject. The powerful testimony at the meeting on the extent of the suffering of women and girls, in camps for displaced persons in Darfur and in regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where certain groups engage in systematic sexual violence accompanied by acts of barbarism that defy reason, reminded us that on the ground the real situation for women has changed far too little since 2000.

The Security Council and all the actors involved in the implementation of the resolution must therefore ask themselves a number of questions. How can we claim that resolution 1325 (2000) is being implemented when 27,000 cases of sexual violence were recorded in 2006 in South Kivu province alone? Again, those are just the reported incidents. We can assume that the reality was far worse. How could such a situation develop? What new means can be used to put an end to that situation — and all situations in which women are victims of systematic violence? How do we explain the fact that in spite of specific references in certain Council resolutions and statements, many peace processes still take place without the involvement of women and without taking into account their concerns and contributions?

In order to allow the Council to respond to those among other questions and to develop new approaches to ensure a more effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), especially with regard to protection, France had been in favour of the speedy preparation of a report of the Secretary-General on this specific issue. We regret that such a basic proposal was not supported by all Security Council members. We hope nevertheless that the mechanism put in place to ensure that the Council has more detailed information on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) with respect to all the situations on its agenda, and that it can engage in dialogue on this subject with the special representatives of the Secretary-General. We hope that that mechanism will make it possible for those questions to be addressed more effectively and will lead to concrete improvements in the situation on the ground.

Before concluding, I wish to refer to a few areas on which my delegation believes we need to focus our efforts in post-conflict phases. The first is the protection of women and the rehabilitation of victims, especially victims of sexual violence. How can lasting peace be restored when women who have already been victims of violence in the conflict phase are then ostracized within their communities? It is important, inter alia, that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take fully into account the fate of women who have been associated, most frequently by force, with groups of combatants.

The second relates to the administration of justice. How can women speak out and take part in civic life if they have to remain in contact with their former tormentors and to live in fear? How can we ask them to seek justice if that is synonymous with further humiliation, denial and, potentially, reprisal? The fight against impunity and the adoption of a gender-specific approach by the judicial system are indispensable.

The third area is the participation of women in decision-making processes. Access by women to elective office is an important element; one can only welcome in that regard the examples of Rwanda, Burundi and Liberia. But we must also ensure that women, especially through their organizations, are involved in all administrative processes.

Fourthly and finally, the establishment of institutions committed to parity is necessary. The phase of building institutions offers a unique opportunity for countries emerging from conflict to establish institutions in accordance with the most advanced legal standards. Instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women must be a point of reference for all actors involved in reconstruction.

In conclusion, I wish only to say that we consider the ongoing participation of civil society to be extremely important in our collective efforts on this subject. In that connection, my delegation listened with great attention to the speech by Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. My delegation thanks her for her contribution, which will continue to spur and inspire our actions in the Security Council towards the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

**Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro** (Congo) (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I wish to begin by expressing to you the regrets of your brother and fellow Foreign Minister, His Excellency Mr. Basile Ikouebe, who, because of his schedule was unable to travel to New York. My delegation also wishes to express its pleasure in seeing you presiding over this annual debate of the Security Council to review — now, seven years after its adoption — the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

This year's report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) provides useful information on progress made since the first follow-up on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of that historic resolution. It will be recalled that the first report (S/2006/770) made it possible to see what progress had been made and what shortcomings needed to be corrected, thus allowing for the updating of the System-wide Action Plan for 2008-2009. In that connection, my delegation wishes to thank all of those involved in that difficult task, including the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, experts from throughout the system, United Nations bodies and civil society organizations. The quality of their work deserves our appreciation.

In the light of the report of the Secretary-General, my delegation has a number of observations to make. Numerous obstacles impede the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in particular serious cases of discrimination and sexual violence against women and girls. They are the ones who pay a particularly high price in conflict situations. The frequency of acts of violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations is increasingly widely recognized and documented. Everybody today agrees that such violence must be condemned, along with the climate of impunity in which such acts continue to be perpetrated, as those are the main obstacles to peacebuilding.

My Government understands the need to eliminate all obstacles to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and we remain convinced that success more than ever requires close cooperation between Member States and the United Nations system. Only then can our objectives be achieved. For its part, Congo is working to mainstream the gender perspective in many sectors of public life and to involve women in all stages of the peacebuilding process, in particular the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, on the basis of the Beijing Platform for Action and resolution 1325 (2000).

At the regional level, Congolese women are involved in the International Conference on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region and are actively participating in the work of the thematic groups and in meetings of the preparatory committees. In that framework, they participated in the meeting of women from the Great Lakes region on peace and security held last year in Kinshasa.

With respect to the role played by women in building the life of the nation and in the light of the recommendations of the first report of the Peacebuilding Commission (S/2007/458), my Government supports any mechanism designed to ensure the full participation of women in the post-conflict phase. Along the same lines, the Congo is in favour of improving the representation of women in peacekeeping operations and appreciates the successful efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in that area.

We believe, however, that additional efforts need to be made at all levels in order to appoint women officials to high-ranking posts within the United Nations system, including as special representatives or envoys of the Secretary-General. In that connection, we welcome the appointment of Ms. Ellen Margrethe Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia. Her ability and her dynamism have already convinced us that she will be equal to the task conferred on her by the Secretary-General.

Moreover, the Congo is convinced that it is necessary to establish a subsidiary body on women and peace and security whose mandate would be, inter alia, to ensure the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Indeed, such a mechanism would help not only to strengthen the actions of the Security Council by speeding up the implementation of that resolution but would also help to perpetuate the positive changes in the situation and the role of women, in particular in the case of countries in a conflict or post-conflict situation, as well as enhancing coherence in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at various levels. However, as we focus our attention on all forms of violence against women and young girls in countries on the agenda of the Security Council, the fact nonetheless remains that the seriousness of these acts in most countries in conflict cannot fail to awaken our collective conscience.

My delegation is ready to support any action designed to speed up the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In that regard, we fully support the draft presidential statement prepared by the delegation of Ghana, which we warmly thank for this important initiative and which we congratulate once again on the outstanding manner in which it has presided over the Council.

In conclusion, my delegation hopes to see this debate contribute to enhancing the now recognized role of women in the maintenance of peace and security, and in peacebuilding.

**Mr. Kumalo** (South Africa): Mr. President, your presence in New York with us today is a clear indication of how seriously Ghana takes this matter. We commend the Ghanaian delegation for organizing the annual open debate on women and peace and security. We are also grateful for the contributions made to the debate by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno on behalf of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Ms. Joanne Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, and Ms. Gina Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement that will be read out by the delegation of Zambia on behalf of the Southern African Development Community.

It has been seven years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). While there has been progress in implementing that resolution, there is still a lot to be done to improve the lives of women, particularly women in conflict-affected areas. For this reason we agree with the concept paper, presented to us by the Ghanaian delegation (S/2007/598, annex), that one of the central objectives remains to meet the demand for gender mainstreaming in all its aspects.

Throughout the history of South Africa, women have played a pivotal role in the liberation of our country. In the negotiations for a new South Africa, women were in the forefront in developing a constitutional framework centred on a non-sexist and non-racist policy. From the beginning, South Africans recognized the need for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all aspects of our lives. As a result, we pride ourselves on having senior women in key government, business and civil society positions. As South Africa has increased its participation in the international arena, our representatives in regional and international peacebuilding and peacekeeping efforts have always included women.

Also from our experience, we have learned that it is important to build solidarity among all actors, particularly women. For example, South African Women in Dialogue (SAWID) has links with women throughout the world. SAWID has collaborated with women from the Great Lakes region, including women from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Recently, SAWID travelled to Darfur in solidarity with the displaced women of the Sudan.

Despite those efforts, South Africa believes that there is still more work to be done in support of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict societies. Women and girls make up a disproportionate and overwhelming number of the victims of violence, particularly gender-based violence. Mothers and girls are the first to be affected in war situations and suffer among the highest casualties. Those who survive conflict are victimized and traumatized yet again just because they are women.

While the situation of women, particularly in conflict areas, remains desperate and unacceptable, we should resist seeing women only as victims. While women may be the first casualties of conflict, it is also true that women have played and continue to play a meaningful role in the recovery of families and their reintegration into society. Women have also been among leading policymakers and have been instrumental in bringing about democracy in some post-conflict societies. As we approach the seventh anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), my country, South Africa, would like to pay tribute to those women. One of Africa's leaders is President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, who was one of the major contributors to resolution 1325 (2000), which we are discussing today.

We also agree that Member States must continually look at measures to strengthen the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We believe that full implementation requires the resolve of Member States in forming partnerships with civil society, the private sector and community-based organizations to promote women's rights.

During the negotiations for the drafting of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC), South Africa was among the advocates of ensuring that gender-based violence was included in the list of war crimes. When the International Criminal Court was created, South Africa presented a woman candidate, who has since contributed meaningfully to the ICC's jurisprudence on violence against women in armed conflict. Judge Navi Pillay, a member of the ICC, is a well-known advocate for the protection of women's rights.

Also, South Africa has joined with Sweden and others in promoting the Partners for Gender Justice initiative. The aim of that initiative is to forge a more coordinated and integrated system of collaboration to assist national stakeholders in achieving gender justice in conflict affected countries.

We recently hosted in Cape Town the Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice, with the participation of ministers of justice and ministers of gender, at which there was a sharing of experiences on how best to identify gaps, challenges and opportunities with regard to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) at the national level. The Regional Meeting also focused on ways to promote gender justice and ensure the participation of women in the legal system. We wish to thank the President of the Council, the Permanent Representative of Ghana, for circulating the report of the Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice as a document of the Security Council (S/2007/607).

In conclusion, South Africa believes that there is still more work that needs to be done to address the situation of women and peace and security. There is a need for increased participation by women at all levels, particularly in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, as well as in United Nations field operations. More women should be appointed as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General. For that reason, we commend the Secretary-General for appointing our colleague Ambassador Ellen Løj of Denmark as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia.

South Africa remains committed to working within a consultative and collaborative framework to find peaceful resolutions to conflicts. To that end, we believe it would be important for women in local communities to be allowed to participate in finding solutions for the reconstruction and rebuilding of their own countries. Besides being the ones who are the first to suffer when there is conflict, women are often the ones who know when and how to rebuild the lives of their families and communities.

**Mr. Chávez** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): Peru welcomes the initiative of the Ghanaian presidency to hold an open debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and on the role of women in peacebuilding. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General for presenting his report. In addition, we appreciate the statements made by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) is revealing, because it indicates that women and girls continue to be the principal victims of acts of violence in armed conflicts. Peru wishes to associate itself with the rejection of all acts of violence and to express its concern at the information that rape and sexual abuse, primarily against women and girls, are increasingly being used intentionally as tools of war by parties to armed conflict. That is why the international community must continue to use all instruments available to put an end to violations of the human rights of women and girls living in situations of armed conflict. This battle must be fought at the national and international levels, with programmes and policies that promote the prevention of violence through the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in all its aspects.

In that regard, we also want to highlight the role of the International Criminal Court in the fight against impunity, as well as the need for States to make it a priority to shoulder their responsibility to do justice and punish those responsible for crimes, as part of a comprehensive approach to peace, justice, truth and national reconciliation.

Peru notes with satisfaction the Secretary-General's report and the initiatives and actions undertaken by United Nations entities to implement resolution 1325 (2000). We agree with the Secretary-General that, if we are to promote the implementation of the resolution, we must improve and rework measures adopted by the United Nations and by States that find themselves in conflict situations or reconstruction processes. We appreciate the rethinking of the concept of the 2008-2009 Action Plan to make it a results-based instrument for planning, following up on and presenting results-based reports.

We share the view that the Action Plan's central objective must be to develop the capacity of United Nations operations to support peace as well as post-conflict and reconstruction efforts so that they can assist States in their efforts to strengthen national capacity to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women in the areas of peace and security. In that connection, we support the Secretary-General's proposal that a system-wide evaluation of the progress achieved in the coordinated implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) be conducted in 2010, followed by the submission of a report to the Security Council.

Peru supports the initiative to hold Security Council consultations on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its application on the ground. Such consultations would enable States to obtain detailed information about progress, good practices and difficulties related to the implementation of the resolution. Furthermore, we believe it is important that the Secretary-General report on progress made in mainstreaming the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations and that disaggregated information be provided on types of violence — including sexual and gender-based violence — committed by parties to armed conflict. We are already aware of tragic cases that have occurred in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Darfur, among other places.

Finally, we believe it is important that the international community support the national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) as well as the United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, particularly by providing sufficient financial resources in a timely and sustainable manner.

The work still lies ahead and must be tackled jointly by States, the United Nations system and civil society in order to strengthen follow-up and accountability regarding the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

**Mr. Spatafora** (Italy): The presence of Minister Osei-Adjei among us is an honour; it shows the significance that the Ghanaian presidency attaches to an issue of crucial importance, for reasons that we all know.

I should like, first of all, to thank the Secretary-General for his very focused statement. I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. It would be very useful if we could have copies of his talking points, because he discussed several points that I have to build upon. I thank Special Adviser Mayanja for the passion that she expressed in her briefing, which I shall also revisit. I thank Ms. Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for her briefing. Italy is a true believer in and a strong supporter of UNIFEM, which is a shining example in the galaxy of funds within the United Nations system. If UNIFEM were not there, we would have to create it. Finally, I thank Ms. Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for her briefing, which was very passionate. I will also come back to that in a presentation that is cool, but all the more compelling because of its coolness.

In view of the constraints on our time, I shall touch on just a few points, dispensing with my talking points.

One of the points made by Mr. Guéhenno was the way in which we enhance and have clearly in mind the relationship between protection and empowerment.

That is a double track, and we must make progress on both tracks. I will not elaborate on that here; it has been very eloquently addressed by many preceding speakers.

Another point — which, as we have heard from those around this table, is very sensitive — is that, as Mr. Guéhenno said, it is time to review the segmented approach. We could also put it the way that the Secretary-General and Ms. Mayanja did: we must decide whether or not to create new bodies or new mechanisms. I do not want to belabour this point. But I fully agree that it is now time to review the segmented approach. What we need is, to quote Mr. Guéhenno once again, a mutually reinforcing, more coordinated and integrated approach.

Thanks to the commitment of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, including, inter alia, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNIFEM, much progress has undoubtedly been made, as has been pointed out. But, as has also been said, much remains to be done. I think, however, that we have to go deeper into this point — the relation between progress achieved and what remains to do.

I am not so sure that I would agree with what Ms. Sandler said, namely, that the presidential statement that is to follow is a message of hope. It is, of course, useful, but I wonder — looking at it and at what we do from the point of view of those who are the victims on the ground, of those who suffer — if, after six or seven years, what we produce, namely, presidential statements, meetings, plans of action and so on — could be perceived as a message of frustration, as a message of despair, rather than as a message of hope, because what we manage to do is to do only presidential statements.

What I think and hear — and I think Belgian Special Envoy Chevalier hinted at this — is that we know very well what have to do. In a certain way, we do not need more information. Of course, I fully agree that having more information is very useful. But if we really wanted to, we could act today on the information that we have. We do not need more information. We need to know how we can have an impact on the ground, because the benchmark of our credibility, the benchmark of our success comes, as Ms. Torry has told us, from the NGO point of view, that is to say, from the ground. In the last six years has the suffering diminished? Has the number of victims diminished? I am not so sure, listening to what has been said — and I thank the French delegation for what we heard just now. The number of victims in Kivu alone in just the past few months is 27,000, if I remember well. Clearly, I think, we have had a setback.

So, I think the prism through which we have to look at what we must do is the awareness that there has been a setback, notwithstanding everything that we have done, or everybody's efforts, or the evidence of progress. But, at the end of the day, what counts is that there has been a setback, seen from the point of view of the people who suffer on the ground. It is from that point that we will have to start to act.

**The President**: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana.

It is a great pleasure for me join the Council at this meeting, which, in my view, has provided fresh and welcome insights into how we can work together to meet what we all agree is one of the foremost challenges facing the world community in this century. The vital role of women in building and maintaining international peace and security has already been forcefully brought home to us. Our shared goal remains securing women's full and meaningful involvement in that enterprise. Therefore, I commend the Security Council on its leadership and its determination to bring to fruition the goals set out in resolution 1325 (2000) of October 2000.

I further acknowledge the important steps that have been taken by the Secretary-General to ensure that not only does the United Nations remain a pacesetter in gender-mainstreaming, but that it also extends vital support to Member States in order for them to fulfil their obligations under resolution 1325 (2000).

Ghana welcomes the commitment shown by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), and the various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups that are actively promoting the objectives enshrined in the resolution.

Like other delegations, we also attach great importance to the issues of coordination, accountability, monitoring and evaluation, both within the United Nations system and in the context of national action plans, in accordance with the resolution. Therefore, we consider worthy of emulation the example shown by those Governments that are far advanced in developing national action plans aimed at mainstreaming a gender perspective in the training of military personnel, especially those sent on peacekeeping missions.

Significantly, a gender perspective is also increasingly being integrated into aid packages designed for countries that have recently emerged from conflict. These positive trends, in themselves, demonstrate what could be achieved if Member States were to commit themselves fully to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). As has been repeatedly stated, the resolution provides a workable framework for action by all stakeholders.

Much as we are encouraged by the steady progress that has been made since the adoption of the resolution, we believe nevertheless that the challenges and gaps that have been highlighted during this debate deserve serious attention.

The apparent lack of political will on the part of some Governments, coupled with genuine financial and human resource constraints, has contributed to the inadequate institutional response to resolution 1325 (2000) that has been observed by various speakers.

The Secretary-General has put forward several concrete proposals in his latest progress report on resolution 1325 (2000) touching on a number of priority areas. Member States, the United Nations system and civil society actors are all called upon to intensify their efforts towards achieving tangible results that would be reflected in the increased participation of women in decision-making and peace processes, and in the protection of women and girls in conflict situations, inter alia.

Ghana has made considerable progress in developing the necessary legal and institutional frameworks that can facilitate the implementation of the resolution, including the establishment of a Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs. Our objective is to give due prominence and practical meaning to the issues that remain at the heart of our concerns. In the coming years, we shall be seeking closer collaboration between Government and Ghanaian civil society groups and with our respective counterparts abroad. That is in recognition of the benefits of global networking.

For its part, the Security Council should similarly explore the feasibility of a follow-up mechanism that would, in addition to the annual open debates, enable it to monitor closely the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in a more coordinated and systematic fashion. As the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has more than a functional interest in ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women in all aspects of peace and security.

The preponderance of women and girls among the victims of human rights abuses and gender-based violence, both during and after conflicts, poses a direct challenge to the authority of the Security Council, but the situation also imbues the Council's mandate with a profound meaning. Indeed, the Secretary-General eloquently summed it up in his 2004 report, entitled "Women and peace and security" when he observed that,

> "Resolution 1325 (2000) holds out a promise to women across the globe that their rights will be protected and that barriers to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace will be removed. We must uphold this promise." (S/2004/814, para. 121)

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Bert Koenders, Minister for Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

**Mr. Koenders** (Netherlands): Approximately one third of all women in the Congolese province of Kivu have been raped. In the Sudan, tens of thousands of women in the last years have been molested, mutilated and sexually abused, and not a single person has been held accountable.

Recently, I visited the Democratic Republic of Congo. Even though I knew all the statistics, I was still horrified by what I saw in refugee camps and local hospitals. Unfortunately, this pattern of abuse is found in nearly all of the world's conflict areas. Wherever hostilities erupt, women and girls are most vulnerable. In the former Yugoslavia, women were purposely raped to bear the enemy's children. In Central America, violence against women is increasing with dramatic figures, and we find similar grave situations around the world. The responsibility to protect is an urgent call here.

Violence against women is more than a violation of human rights. It is also a security issue, and that is why we are here today. Over the last decade, violence against women has become endemic in conflict zones. It has become a weapon of modern warfare that specifically and structurally targets women. That is why it is so important that it be discussed here. Doctors two weeks ago spoke to me about a horrible epidemic. The United Nations Security Council took a big step forward when it unanimously adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

Violence against women is only one aspect of resolution 1325 (2000) — although a very important one — but it deserves the immediate and urgent attention of everyone in this room, for it is the most prominent aspect underlining the little progress we have made since the adoption of the resolution in the year 2000. We have been telling ourselves for seven years now that it is more than words on paper. It is a clarion call to arms, a catalyst.

In the Netherlands, we are developing a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in consultation with all relevant ministries and civil society. I assure this Council that it will not remain merely another piece of paper.

More than anything else, we need leadership. Let us set an agenda for action here today — an agenda that I believe should focus on four issues.

First, we need to include women in our security strategies. This means investing more strongly in security sector reform and in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes in post-conflict countries to ensure that violence against women does not continue after a conflict has ended. I have seen the urgency of the need for this in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If there is not more security sector reform, the army indeed preys more on the population than it protects the women. We need to train armies and soldiers, making them aware that violence against women is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. The Netherlands will allocate extra funding for security sector reform, DDR and training programmes in fragile States. We have already provided the Department of Peacekeeping Operations with funds for gender expertise in order to integrate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations.

Second is the matter of empowerment. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, women risk their own lives to encourage others to report sexual abuse to the proper authorities. We need to create safe havens for women who have suffered from violence and help them reintegrate into their societies. As Council members know, they are often isolated. We have to support women who set up their own networks for conflict prevention and for dealing with trauma. And, even more, we need to ensure that women get the place they deserve at the table in formal peace processes. In Liberia, women played an essential role in the peace process, bringing people together across factional lines. I recently created a fund for women's rights and empowerment, and I hope other donors will follow this example, so that we can really pool our efforts.

Thirdly, I would like to call for the speedy conclusion of ongoing consultations on the new gender entity of the United Nations — it is taking a long time — and to stress that this entity will have to make violence against women an urgent issue. We should also support United Nations agency programmes directed at violence against women, especially the United Nations Trust Fund to End Violence against Women, administered by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

Finally, we have to stop impunity. The grave violation of women's human rights, through massive rape and other sexual violence, requires the immediate attention of organizations such as the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other relevant tribunals. The Security Council can play a role in this area by referring such cases to the ICC. We have to give a clear signal to the perpetrators that the international community is no longer tolerating impunity for these heinous crimes.

In conclusion, I would like to underline the crucial role of the Security Council in addressing violence against women in conflict situations. In this respect, I would like to express my strong support for the Secretary-General's recommendation to establish a dedicated monitoring mechanism to increase the effectiveness of the Council's contribution to preventing and redressing violence against women in armed conflict.

Last but not least, uncomfortable issues like rape and other forms of sexual violence against women should be openly discussed with and by Governments, members of parliament, militia leaders and opinion makers — by us. The Security Council has to raise its voice on this issue. The "big silence" has to stop. I hope that this debate in the Security Council will give a clear message to the international community.

Let us join forces and implement resolution 1325 (2000). Let us end the abuse of women everywhere by stopping this "big silence" today.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

**Mr. Salgueiro** (Portugal): To save time, I will not read the complete text of my intervention, which has been distributed.

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is a landmark along the road towards gender equality and the full recognition of the role women play in society, especially in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict situations.

The rights of women and girls, and gender equality, are at the core of major international instruments, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Beijing + 5, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome. The European Union abides by and seeks to promote the full implementation of these international instruments, not only within the EU membership but also in its policies towards third countries. Commitments to promote the role of women in peacebuilding and enhance the implementation of Security Council 1325 (2000) are also reflected in the 2006 EU joint concept for support to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and the communication on gender in development cooperation.

Nowadays, gender equality concerns are mainstreamed into our development and cooperation policies and in the framework of the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP), as well as in other EU projects and programmes. We wish to highlight the three-year partnership with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) launched in April 2007 to build capacity and improve accountability for gender equality in 12 countries, with a specific focus on women in peacebuilding and the implementation of Security Council 1325 (2000). Also, the EU Conflict Prevention Network will be exploring ways of assuring the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the international community, Governments and local civil society organizations.

The Council of the European Union has also adopted conclusions on gender equality and gender mainstreaming in crisis management, which are currently being implemented at all levels of European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) missions. The EU Council stressed the importance of fully implementing resolution 1325 (2000) from the early planning stages to the conduct and evaluation of ESDP missions and operations.

Particular emphasis has been placed on the inclusion of measures against sexual and gender-based violence in transitional justice mechanisms, while emphasizing that peacebuilding and reconstruction plans should include comprehensive victim-protection and support mechanisms. In that regard, the European Union also welcomes the draft policy statement and draft strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel, as well as the upcoming work on the criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. The European Union is committed to working towards the creation of a clear United Nations framework to respond to situations of sexual exploitation and abuse, and will stay actively engaged in the discussions of the Ad Hoc Working Group.

On the other hand, we must not forget the preventive dimension with regard to gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the European Union context, that includes the development of rules of conduct — such as the generic standards of behaviour, which are binding on ESDP staff and forbid involvement in sexual exploitation, trafficking in women and prostitution. The European Union would support the elaboration of corresponding rules and practices for United Nations operations and missions.

The EU is deeply concerned about the continued use of sexual violence against women in current conflict situations — such as in the case of the situation recently reported by Mr. John Holmes, Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, and others, on the appalling and unprecedented phenomenon of systematic rape and brutality against women in eastern Congo. Sadly, that demonstrates the importance of furthering the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We believe that the impact of violence against women has manifest consequences for the success and sustainability of peacebuilding efforts. That is a subject that demands the attention of the Security Council. The European Union would welcome a report by the Secretary-General on the global problem of sexual and gender-based violence in both conflict and post-conflict situations, to highlight the implications and consequences for peacekeeping and peacebuilding activities.

Support must also be directed to strengthening judicial and legal systems, particularly in countries experiencing protracted crises.

The European Union would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Peacebuilding Commission for the achievements of its first year of work. We believe that the Peacebuilding Commission is a most appropriate forum for addressing gender equality and for contributing to the active participation of women in post-conflict reconstruction and institution-building processes, including in decision-making.

We recognize the efforts undertaken to consider gender-equality issues in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission, both in country-specific work and in thematic discussions, as was highlighted in the report on its first session. As recognized in the reports on Burundi and Sierra Leone the European Union urges the Commission to also consider gender equality as a decisive cross-cutting issue in the integrated peacebuilding strategies to be developed in the future.

In addition, it is crucial to include women in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, while taking into account the capacity of women to contribute to stability and decision-making in society and the vulnerability and special needs of women and girls. Let us also not forget the importance of promoting men's awareness of their role in turning gender equality into a reality in every dimension of life.

The European Union welcomes the work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and its reports on the progress made in the implementation of the 2005-2007 System-wide Action Plan, the proposals for an updated plan for the 2008-2009 period, and the collection of good practice and lessons learned in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2005).

The European Union is aware that much remains to be done, including at the national level, to ensure that gender inequality is addressed. The EU also supports the enhancement of mechanisms to further advance the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Monitoring and reporting systems must be improved in order to ensure enhanced accountability.

Moreover, additional efforts need to be undertaken at the level of the United Nations to increase the number of women in senior positions and in peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions.

Cooperation is essential. We will continue to actively work with United Nations agencies, regional organizations — such as the African Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and NATO — non-governmental organizations and all relevant stakeholders. We also believe that it is of great importance to provide information to the broader public on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We are ready to work together with the Secretary-General and to take into account the recommendations of his latest report on women, peace and security in our policies and programmes.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

**Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would first like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate, which we believe is very timely. We are pleased that the Security Council is once again comprehensively addressing the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

At the outset, I should like to say that Spain associates itself with the statement just made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

Despite the positive steps that have to be taken towards the effective implementation of the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000), it seems to us that the international community is moving ahead too slowly when it comes to ensuring the participation of women at all levels of peace processes and with regard to ensuring effective protection for women and girls in conflict situations. That is clear from the briefings made this morning by various officials of the Secretariat.

I should like to underscore that we are especially concerned about ongoing grave violations of international law — including international humanitarian law and human rights law — perpetrated against women and girls, including sexual exploitation and the abuse to which they are subjected in situations of armed conflict. That is something that many speakers who have spoken before me have mentioned.

Resolution 1325 (2000) calls on States to make efforts to implement the resolution at the national level. Spain is committed to effective gender equality as a priority of the Government. We have developed a national action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000) that focuses on the following basic goals.

First, it will strengthen the inclusion of a gender perspective in all phases of our participation in peace missions, from planning to conclusion, including the reconstruction and peacebuilding processes. Secondly, it will ensure that military and civilian police personnel who participate in peace missions receive specific training in matters of equality and in the various aspects of resolution 1325 (2000). Thirdly, it will guarantee women, adolescents and girls in areas of conflict and post-conflict the full enjoyment of their human rights, and encourage women's participation in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. Fourthly, it will promote as a cross-cutting issue the principle of equal treatment of women and men in the planning and execution of activities in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and their families. Fifthly, it will encourage awareness and the dissemination of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as the work of Spanish civil society in regard to it.

In order to reach those goals, we have considered actions not only at the national level, but also at the heart of the regional structures to which Spain belongs, such as the European Union, NATO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and especially and most importantly within the framework of our participation in the United Nations. In that regard, we are striving to contribute to the promotion of gender equality policies in general, and in particular in relation to women's participation in peace processes, from conflict prevention to peacebuilding.

At the national level, Spain is decisively progressing towards the full integration of women into its armed forces at the same level of opportunity and well-being at work as men. In a very few years, we have achieved second place in the European Union with respect to the proportion of women in the armed forces, through a decisive policy to make the military attractive to women by promoting, among other measures, the conciliation of work and family.

Spain understands peacebuilding as a broad process in which development assistance is fundamental. In that regard, Spanish official development aid directed towards gender issues has doubled from 2004 to 2007. In particular, we have continued to work closely with the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, providing Spanish cooperation funds for peacebuilding, especially in Africa and Latin America. Sector strategies for Spanish cooperation relating to gender in the areas of development and peacebuilding have also been approved, in which the promotion of resolution 1325 (2000) is an immediate key priority. At this very moment, a plan on women and peacebuilding is being drafted for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which will be directed towards all actors of Spanish cooperation.

I do not wish to end my statement without properly highlighting the important role that the Peacebuilding Commission is being called upon to play in issues of women, peace and security. We are convinced of the need to integrate a gender perspective into its work. That will surely result in better and more fruitful developments in favour of peace throughout the world. Spain is willing to work closely with the Commission on that important issue and to continue supporting the Peacebuilding Fund.

**Mr. Lidén** (Sweden): Let me start by associating myself with the statement just made by the Ambassador of Portugal on behalf of the European Union (EU).

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) seven years ago underlined the importance of ensuring that the goal of gender justice and gender equality permeates the work of the international community in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, reconstruction and peacebuilding processes. As we have so often seen, the nature of modern armed conflict is such that the civilian population and women are particularly affected. Women must be involved in resolving the armed conflicts affecting them, their families and their communities. Women should take full part in the creation and implementation of peace agreements, and they must be able to participate equally in political decision-making process. Efforts such as security system reform should have a gender and human security perspective.

We urge the Secretary-General, the Security Council and all Member States to contribute to the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including by increasing the number of women in senior positions at field level.

Last year, Sweden launched a national plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The approach of the Swedish Government to resolution 1325 (2000) is based on a holistic view of security, development and human rights. Agencies, ministries and Government offices are working together to achieve the goals of the resolution. As an active Member of the United Nations and the European Union, Sweden has an obvious interest in and responsibility for the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in United Nations peace support activities, as well as in the European Union's external relations. The EU's contribution to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) enhances its effectiveness and credibility as an actor in crisis management. The EU handbook on gender for the planning and conduct of operations, as well as the fairly new feature of gender advisers in EU missions, are some concrete measures.

The United Nations system has made considerable efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). However, more needs to be done both in the field and at Headquarters. Concerted and concrete efforts by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office are called for. We are also looking forward to new initiatives coming from the Security Council, and we should like to have seen a request for a special report on the situation of women and girls as victims in armed conflicts.

We believe that the United Nations system needs to redouble its efforts to counter violence against women in conflict. It is also important to underline that such violence rarely stops once the conflict is over. In some cases, violence against women even increases. The efforts to stop this kind of violence must not end with a peace agreement or even after democratic elections have taken place. The transition period should be an opportunity to strengthen the rule of law — and the law must protect women. For that to happen, women must also be guaranteed full access to justice. That very matter will be discussed today in a meeting organized by the Partners for Gender Justice Initiative, co-chaired by South Africa and Sweden.

In last year's open debate on resolution 1325 (2000), Sweden underlined that we all have a responsibility to provide ideas, initiatives and good practices, and not to simply ask for reports and proposals from others. The focus of the Partners for Gender Justice initiative that I mentioned has been on empowering women to participate in, and gain improved access to, the justice sector. That work is an important element for implementing resolution 1325 (2000). Sweden calls on other Member States and the United Nations to carry it forward by initiating concrete programmes in the area of women and justice.

More attention should also be paid to the pressing issue of effectively incorporating women into demobilization, disarmament and reintegration measures. Experiences from Sierra Leone and Liberia show that women who are former combatants or have been associated with fighting forces face more difficulties in being accepted back into their communities than men.

I will finish my statement by once again underlining that we all have a common responsibility to contribute to the experience-sharing that is needed for the further implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Sweden attaches great importance to taking into account gender perspectives in all areas of work, nationally and internationally. It is my hope that this debate will be a catalyst for further efforts in the struggle to recognize and act on the legitimate demands of women for full equality, justice and opportunity, not only in armed conflicts, but in life itself.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Guatemala.

**Mr. Skinner-Klée** (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful to the Ghanian presidency for convening this annual meeting on women and peace and security, which helps us further the work of achieving the full and complete implementation of Council resolution 1325 (2000).

This debate also allows us to consider the full application of that important resolution. We are convinced of the essential role played by women in the prevention and settlement of conflicts, in the promotion of justice and of reconciliation, support for disarmament and demobilization and the reconstruction of national institutions — all essential pillars for peacebuilding.

We are also aware that women and girls suffer from effects more devastating than those already entailed by the conflict itself, especially owing to increasingly widespread gender-based violence, rapes, sexual exploitation, sexual slavery, undesired pregnancy as a result of these heinous acts and the stigma that those women and girls suffer in their own communities. Those are all acts that affect their psychological and emotional stability and even put their lives at risk.

We shall not rest until we see that in the field, the specific needs of women and girls are receiving the special priority attention they deserve, with the active cooperation of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes that work on this issue and Member States, with the support of non-governmental organizations and civil society groups. In that context, we want to recognize the important work being done by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. We urge them to continue their contribution in view of the major challenges that lie ahead.

In that connection, we support the creation of effective institutions that ensure the promotion of the rights of women and girls and the capacity-building necessary to their inclusion, on an equal basis, in peace process negotiations and at the decision-making level in peacebuilding. The mainstreaming of the gender perspective in national and international plans is vital to achieving integral, balanced peacekeeping operations.

We thank the Secretary-General for his annual report (S/2007/567), which serves as a basis for this dialogue, because it continues to update, monitor and revise the previous Action Plan, for 2005-2007, and for his presentation of the new, updated Action Plan, for 2008-2009, on the advances and obstacles in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Our delegation believes that the changes made in the Action Plan for 2008-2009 are positive. The re-shaping of the concept and the focus on five thematic areas — of which prevention, participation and protection are transversal, interrelated with other thematic resolutions; relief and recovery emphasize the concrete needs of women and children; and the normative thematic area — will make it possible to broaden the scope of efforts to apply resolution 1325 (2000) and will help States to meet their commitments regarding equality between women and men and the empowerment of women in the field of peace and security.

As a country that has emerged from conflict, we are aware of the importance of receiving help in preparing national plans and strategies to coordinate policies, because that is the most important time to promote the application of resolution 1325 (2000).

At the national level, the Ministry of Defence of Guatemala confirmed its commitment to the principle of gender equality through a process that harmoniously integrates women into military life. That has been accomplished with respect for human rights and in the context of the national and international legal order.

Since women were accepted in the military in 1996, there has been a yearly increase in the participation of Guatemalan women in the army, as cadets in the Polytechnic School. Currently, there are 59 women officers in active duty, which represents 4 per cent of the total. There are 604 women specialists, which represents 18 per cent. There are 42 women who are commissioned officers, representing almost 16 per cent. In summary, there are 955 women in active duty, amounting to 7.17 per cent of the total. Those woman have grades ranging from second lieutenant to colonel, in areas such as army administration, military police, war material, transmissions, navy and air force, and are all graduates of the Polytechnic School.

In peacekeeping operations, we have maintained an average of 11 per cent of female personnel in contingents in the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), including military observers. We will continue to broaden our policy of including female personnel in each contingent. Currently, in the military police unit in our MINUSTAH contingent, a woman commands the operational and investigation unit.

Allow me to refer to gender advisers, who should be included in peacekeeping operations in the field. Currently, 11 out of 18 active missions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations include that post. That is encouraging, but it is not enough. We believe that every mission should incorporate that post.

Peacekeeping operations, in addition, can help provide information on the violent acts committed against women and girls. The basic thing is to know exactly what is happening on the ground. As Minister Koenders of the Netherlands rightly pointed out, it is essential not to remain silent and not to allow silence to become impunity.

**The President**: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. In view of the lateness of the hour, I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m. this afternoon.

*The meeting was suspended at 1.20 p.m.*

United Nations S/PV.5766 (Resumption 1)

# Security Council

Sixty-second year

*Provisional*

## 5766th meeting

Tuesday, 23 October 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

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| *President*: | Mr. Osei-Adjei | (Ghana) |
| *Members*: | Belgium | Mr. Chevalier |
| | China | Mr. Liu Zhenmin |
| | Congo | Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro |
| | France | Mr. Lacroix |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Pratomo |
| | Italy | Mr. Spatafora |
| | Panama | Mr. Arias |
| | Peru | Mr. Chávez |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Nasser |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Rogachev |
| | Slovakia | Ms. Algayerová |
| | South Africa | Mr. Kumalo |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Ms. Pierce |
| | United States of America | Mr. Wolff |

## Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

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This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

*The meeting resumed at 3.10 p.m.*

**The President**: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Benin in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

*At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ehouzou (Benin) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.*

**The President**: I wish to remind all speakers, as I indicated this morning, to limit their statements to no more than five minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

**Mr. Takasu** (Japan): I wish to express our gratitude to you, Sir, for organizing and presiding over this open debate. I would also like to thank the guest speakers of this morning for their very insightful presentations.

If we are to move closer towards realizing the principles that Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) set out, concrete actions have to be taken by all players, beginning with the Member States, the United Nations system, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations, especially those women's organizations that are working on the ground.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) needs to be implemented in a coherent and effective manner. Japan welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2007/567). The report provides an overview of what the System-wide Action Plan has achieved so far, what gaps exist in its implementation and what challenges must be surmounted if the Plan is to be completely successful. We are also pleased with the development of a policy framework, implementation strategies and a results-based management framework, as they will assist in improving accountability, monitoring and reporting for the Action Plan for 2008-2009.

The initiative by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security to build a database on good practices and lessons learned in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) is welcome. We hope it will be used primarily to indicate how the activities of the United Nations system are contributing to actual positive changes in women's lives on the ground. We are also pleased with the appointment of Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, and we congratulate her. She is the first woman Special Representative of the Secretary-General among those currently serving.

The principles of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) have been increasingly shared and applied in many post-conflict situations. However, we have witnessed so many countries emerging from conflict sliding back into violence. In that context, the establishment of the Peacebuilding Commission was a milestone in achieving the purposes of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

A gender perspective must be integrated into peacebuilding activities. The consolidation of peace requires the full participation of women in all related processes, starting with peace negotiations, securing domestic stability, arranging for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance and national reconciliation. Japan is pleased to note that gender equality issues have been identified and integrated into the work of the Peacebuilding Commission in the cases of both Burundi and Sierra Leone. We have to ensure that the active participation of women is fully incorporated in post-conflict strategies. As Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, Japan will make every effort to ensure that the Commission takes up a policy and strategic review of the role of women in peacebuilding processes as a follow-up to today's open debate in the Security Council.

There is no use in discussing conflict or peace without taking into consideration the situation of the vulnerable people whom conflict impacts most directly, especially women. In post-conflict situations, women are also able to play a critical role by bringing their special needs into every stage and process of peace consolidation and ensuring that those needs are reflected. That clearly indicates the importance of a people-centred approach which focuses on the empowerment of individuals and communities and not only on protecting them from threats to their safety and basic well-being. That is the human security approach that Japan has been promoting globally and locally with special efforts.

In order to put the concept of human security into practice and to promote concrete action, Japan has supported the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security since 1999. The Trust Fund has supported projects to assist women in conflict and post-conflict situations in many countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda, Burundi and Afghanistan. Those projects have helped in creating conditions for coexistence and in promoting reconciliation among people belonging to former parties to a conflict. We hope that the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, together with the Peacebuilding Fund, will be utilized to support concrete projects which will facilitate women's initiatives to restore economic and social stability in post-conflict situations.

In closing, Japan wishes to pledge its continuing support for efforts to realize the goals of resolution 1325 (2000) so that women will be ensured security and safety in their lives and so that their special needs will be taken care of in times of armed conflict and in peacekeeping and peacebuilding processes.

**The President**: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Marjatta Rasi, Under-Secretary of State of Finland.

**Ms. Rasi** (Finland): First of all, let me thank the Secretary-General for his recent report on women and peace and security (S/2007/567). As the report demonstrates, progress has been made in a number of fields in implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Yet, as we all know, a lot of work still remains to be done in order to overcome institutional and organizational challenges and gaps. Those challenges have been identified accurately in the System-wide Action Plan for 2008-2009.

For more than 50 years, Finland has participated in peacekeeping operations. Finland also has a long history of advancing women's rights, both nationally and internationally. During the Finnish European Union presidency in 2006, the Council of the European Union decided that gender aspects would be incorporated in all activities of the European Security and Defence Policy. To facilitate that task, all European Union member States developed a checklist on mainstreaming gender into the European Security and Defence Policy. The adoption of those two instruments was an important step in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Finland is now in the process of drafting a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We, in close cooperation with civil society, are committed to doing our part to ensure that women's full potential is utilized in the work for better security. The action plan will pay special attention to the development of a gender perspective for national capabilities. The fact that United Nations peacekeeping missions and crisis management operations of the European Union and other regional organizations are dependent on national capabilities means that it is crucial that a gender perspective be integrated into the training of national forces and civilian personnel. We will also pay attention to women's recruitment for crisis management operations. We should not underestimate the power of example in crisis areas. Attention will also be paid to women's and girls' rights and protection. Finland will also consider setting up a pool of experts trained in gender issues.

Let me also highlight the need for increased attention to facilitating women's equal and active participation, from conflict prevention to peace negotiations to reconstruction and political participation. As providers, professionals, mothers and spouses, women feel the impact of conflicts more strongly and often better understand the different dimensions of conflict. Without women's involvement there will be no sustainable peace and we may risk losing the support and respect of the majority of the population.

We, the international community, are in a key position to promote gender-balanced participation by all parties. In this context, I would like to refer to the important work towards a just and sustainable peace undertaken by the International Women's Commission, founded by a group of Palestinian and Israeli women leaders and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). The President of Finland, Tarja Halonen, is one of the honorary Chairs of the Commission. The Commission has stressed the importance of involving women in the peace process between Israel and the Palestinians, and works to include gender equality and a gender perspective in the attempts to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In the same vein, other locally initiated dialogues, such as the face-to-face meetings of the Kosovo Women's Network and Serbia's Women in Black, should be recognized and encouraged.

Finally, I would like to assure you, Sir, of Finland's commitment to close cooperation with you and the Members of the United Nations in the implementation of the 2008-2009 System-wide Action Plan.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Iceland.

**Mr. Hannesson** (Iceland): Let me begin by thanking the delegation of Ghana for convening this open debate on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. I would also like to thank that delegation for providing a concept paper for this meeting (S/2007/598, annex) which contributes to a constructive debate. This important subject deserves our full attention and, more especially, our concrete action.

Let me also thank the Secretary-General himself for his words here this morning, as well as Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Ms. Joanne Sandler and Ms. Gina Torry for their valuable input earlier today. We were indeed very pleased to hear of the Secretary-General's appointment of our Danish friend, Ellen Margrethe Løj, as his Special Representative in Liberia. We congratulate her most sincerely, and we know that this important position will be in capable hands.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is unique. It underscores the central role that women play in conflict resolution and the need to protect their rights. It has proved to be an important tool in promoting the direct and active involvement of women in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It has put gender issues and gender perspective firmly on the agenda of the Council and is relevant to all its actions.

Women are critical to the consolidation of peace and should be part of all peace processes. It is our duty to ensure that the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) are realized at the national, regional and international levels, and that women can fully and equally participate at all levels of decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and peace-building. We must translate words into action.

Iceland welcomes the comprehensive report of the Secretary General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567). The report clearly indicates that significant progress has been made in many areas towards implementation of the System-wide Action Plan on resolution 1325 (2000) for 2005-2007, in particular in areas such as peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding. The report points out, however, that progress has been uneven in many substantive areas of the Action Plan and gaps remain in its implementation. Much therefore remains to be done at the United Nations level, both at headquarters and in the field.

In this context, we highly appreciate the work on the 2008-2009 System-wide Action Plan. We agree that the Action Plan should be a results-oriented monitoring and reporting tool for strengthened inter-agency coordination, enhanced accountability and gender mainstreaming. The United Nations system should engage Governments, civil society and regional organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in its implementation. We need to share experiences and good practices between regional organizations.

Iceland fully endorses the important role of the Peacebuilding Commission in the promotion of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Peacebuilding Commission should integrate a gender perspective in all phases of its work.

Iceland strongly supports Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and is fully committed to implementing it. That includes promoting the rights of women and girls and mainstreaming gender concerns in the United Nations system and in our foreign policy. Iceland is finalizing an action plan in order to intensify our implementation of resolution 1325 (2000); the action plan will be finalized in cooperation with civil society. Emphasis will be on developing a plan which is both ambitious and achievable at the same time. Focus will be put on gender mainstreaming and the participation of women in peacebuilding and stabilization in post-conflict societies.

Iceland now participates in peacebuilding and reconstruction in nine places around the world, including for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in Liberia, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as for UNICEF in Palestine. In the past few years Iceland has encouraged women to increase their participation in these assignments, and currently over 40 per cent of deployed personnel of the Iceland Crisis Response Unit are women.

Iceland's policy on development cooperation attaches great importance to women in conflict areas. Much of Iceland's development cooperation is directed towards facilitating a smooth transition from conflict situations with special emphasis on women and their role in peacebuilding. In this context, I would like to underline the important role of UNIFEM, and I am pleased to mention that the Government of Iceland has decided to double its current contribution to the Fund. This marks a thirty-fold increase in Iceland's contributions to UNIFEM since 2003, an increase which will bring Iceland amongst the top donors to the Fund.

Iceland regards the equal participation of women in peace processes as fundamental for achieving, maintaining and promoting sustainable peace. All of us have a clear duty to work towards the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The United Nations system, Member States and civil society must therefore consistently work together to implement the resolution at all levels. We must translate words into action. For example, ways should be found of involving women in the Israeli-Palestinian peace process in a consistent and structured way. Here I would like to call to the Council's attention that there already exists a forum of influential women from both sides, together with international figures in the International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Israeli-Palestinian Peace. We would like to use this opportunity to urge the Quartet to consider how the peace process can benefit from influential and effective groups like the International Women's Commission.

I thank the President for convening this important meeting. We look forward to further discussions in order to improve the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

**Ms. Banks** (New Zealand): May I first commend the President for the presidential statement that will be adopted at the conclusion of this debate. We particularly welcome the request to include in relevant reporting of the Secretary-General greater disaggregated data on the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls. May I also welcome the recent appointment of Ms. Ellen Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia, which makes her the only woman among the more than 20 Special Representatives of the Secretary-General across the political and peacekeeping missions of the United Nations. So, it is indeed a cause for celebration.

New Zealand recognizes the important role that women play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and we strongly support Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Our commitment to the resolution is reflected in our national, regional and international approach to peacebuilding, conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

We welcome the advances that have been made in those areas by the United Nations system and by Member States. We appreciate the Secretary-General's 2007 report on women and peace and security (S/2007/567) and the many positive examples it describes of the progressive work happening in this field. We are pleased to note the work done to restructure the Organization's implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) under the 2008-2009 United Nations System-Wide Action Plan, as well as the Plan's increased focus on accountability, monitoring and reporting.

New Zealand is taking a number of concrete steps to reinforce its support for resolution 1325 (2000). First, we are committed to encouraging women to undertake assignments on peacekeeping missions. Women from the New Zealand Defence Forces, the New Zealand Police and our wider society are an integral part of New Zealand's participation in regional, United Nations and other international peacekeeping efforts. That includes women working in high-risk areas, such as Afghanistan, and in our operational missions, such as that in Timor-Leste. Up to 30 per cent of all our police peacekeeping deployments are female — among the highest rate in the world. New Zealand recognizes, too, that diversity assists peacekeeping missions in reaching out to a wider sector of the community, which is a fundamental element for effective peacebuilding.

Secondly, this year New Zealand was proud to withdraw its final reservation to the Convention on the

Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which concerned women in the armed forces.

Thirdly, I should like to say that the New Zealand Defence Force recently approved a diversity strategy, which we call "Valuing Diversity: Leadership in Action". The strategy recognizes the value of the full integration of women, the positive effect that it has on morale and the sense of belonging to a wider team in which all members can make meaningful contributions. This approach also recognizes the benefits of having more women at senior levels of the Defence Force. We have worked hard to ensure the integration of women at all levels and in all areas of the New Zealand Defence Force, including combat. We are increasing the number of women in the higher ranks, and we are becoming more effective in retaining women in the Force throughout their careers.

New Zealand's response to resolution 1325 (2000) is proactive. We appreciate the fact that, even in peacetime, it is important to ensure the security of women. New Zealand is currently involved in the Pacific Prevention of Domestic Violence Programme, a joint initiative of New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency (NZAID), the New Zealand Police and the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police organization. Members of the New Zealand Police deliver advice, training and operational support on domestic violence to police forces and communities across the Pacific. This initiative focuses on regional coordination and benchmarking, police capability, relationship-building, the strengthening of Government policy and legislation, a whole-Government approach to domestic violence and ways to influence social change.

In closing, I would like to assure the Security Council that New Zealand, through its development cooperation programmes, peacekeeping efforts and domestic policies, will continue to seek ways to enhance and strengthen the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Kazakhstan.

**Ms. Aitimova** (Kazakhstan): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the newly elected members of the Security Council and to express our belief that their valuable participation in the work of the Council will contribute significantly to the promotion of world peace. I would also like to thank the Ghanaian presidency for organizing this debate and to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their insightful statements.

In 2000, the Security Council adopted a milestone resolution that recognized the vital role of women in the prevention of conflicts and peacebuilding and drew the international community's attention to the crucial issues of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls and the importance of incorporating the gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, negotiation processes and Security Council missions.

Ever since the Security Council has organized annual discussions to review the implementation of the resolution, it has been indicated repeatedly by delegations that women's involvement in decision-making on security issues and in peace processes has had a very positive effect on the peaceful resolution of conflicts and on post-conflict peacebuilding. We are pleased to note that, since the resolution's adoption, the understanding of the role of women in peacemaking, peacekeeping and, no less important, peacebuilding has been growing in recent years. Enhancing the role of women in the area of peacebuilding and security and putting an end to violence against women and girls are priorities for UNIFEM and related United Nations bodies.

Therefore, our delegation notes with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567) and the efforts made by the United Nations system to implement the resolution at all levels. Kazakhstan welcomes the continuation of United Nations activities in this area through the formulation of the new 2008-2009 Action Plan and its five indicated areas of work. However, we would be pleased to see, in addition to monitoring and accountability, greater emphasis placed on effective implementation of the Plan, the participation of civil society, capacity-building aimed at sustaining positive changes in the situation and the role of women in conflict and post-conflict countries.

Our delegation believes that there is a need to expand the sharing of best practices, knowledge and experience by women who have been involved in peacebuilding and peace negotiations with those who wish to join the peace process in conflict areas. There are many, many wise women throughout the world. Why not include on the Council's agenda situations where women have been active and invite them to speak, since they all have national experience and knowledge of their national history? At least, I think that that would not be a bad idea. We are also of the view that the inclusion of the promotion of the culture of peace and tolerance into the thematic area of prevention would contribute significantly to the effectiveness of United Nations conflict prevention activities in the field.

Traditionally, the role of women in society and politics was critical in Kazakh culture. They also participated in decision-making process on issues of war and peace, and no crucial decision was taken without their approval. Women had the power to stop wars and armed conflicts. They were promoters of peace and concord in the country.

Therefore, our country is noted for its multi-ethnic and multi-faith nature. The house called Kazakhstan is home to some 130 nationalities and ethnic groups and more than 40 faiths, which live together as one big family. Indeed, the internal policy and international initiatives of the Republic of Kazakhstan are truly based on the principles of trust and dialogue. Kazakhstan was the initiator of such unique international forums as the Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions and the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA). In this regard, we believe that Kazakhstan's valuable experience in protecting and strengthening agreement and harmonious relations among the various ethnic and religious groups of our country may be of interest to the world public.

In conclusion, in reiterating our strong commitment to the goals of the Beijing Declaration, the Cairo Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and in stating the great importance we attach to resolution 1325 (2000), allow me to stress yet again that stronger commitments should be made and more actions undertaken by Member States and the United Nations system to expedite attainment of the goals and tasks outlined in the resolution.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Liechtenstein.

**Mr. Wenawaser** (Liechtenstein): Mr. President, we wish to thank you and your delegation for organizing this debate, for preparing a concept paper (S/2007/598, annex) in advance, and for putting together the presidential statement that will be adopted later today.

The concept paper and the report submitted by the Secretary-General (S/2007/567) make it clear that we must considerably strengthen our efforts to guarantee the protection of women and girls in conflict-affected societies and to ensure their full and equal participation in peace processes, including negotiations and decision-making. It is a well documented fact that civilians, particularly women and children, continue to account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and that they are increasingly targeted by combatants and other armed elements.

Durable peace and reconciliation are heavily compromised if the perpetrators of such acts are not brought to justice. The Security Council therefore has a vital role to play in ensuring that targeted measures are taken to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual violence in conflict situations and that there is no impunity for such acts.

The referral of the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court (ICC) was a landmark decision, both legally and politically. It was a strong message by the Security Council that the international community will not tolerate impunity for the most serious crimes under international law, including gender-related crimes. We would like to encourage the Council to continue to consider the ICC as a policy option. Referrals to the ICC must, however, be accompanied by sustained political support from the Council through all phases of the judicial proceedings, and they must in some situations be accompanied by other substantive measures.

Within the United Nations system, programmes have been developed to build the leadership and peacemaking capacities of women at all stages of conflict and emergence from conflict. My Government has been financing relevant activities by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

There is ample evidence that women are very active in informal peace processes. In spite of these developments, the official presence of women in such processes is still minimal. There continues to be a lack of political will to recognize women's contributions to peace and to acknowledge their right to participate effectively in peace negotiations. Strengthening women's capacity as peacemakers must be pursued in parallel with increasing women's participation. Creating awareness of peace negotiations as a tool for achieving gender equality is essential.

Against this background, we have consistently and for long years been advocating the appointment of women as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General. We fully support the call addressed to the Secretary-General by the Women Leaders' Working Group on 19 June 2007 to establish, as a matter of high priority, a mechanism to increase the number of women considered for leading United Nations positions, including as heads of peace operations. Like others before me, I welcome in this context the appointment of our former colleague, Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj of Denmark as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia. Such appointments can play a catalytic role in promoting the full potential of women as peacemakers.

This debate presents another opportunity to promote the effective, coherent and systematic implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) through better accountability mechanisms. Member States and civil society organizations have highlighted in the past the need for the Council to develop a reporting and monitoring mechanism to ensure the systematic integration and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in its own work. Such a mechanism could address implementation gaps at the international level, such as inadequate monitoring and reporting on implementation by field missions, particularly on grave violations of human rights, such as sexual violence, and it could improve the information basis for Council deliberations.

It could also strengthen the accountability for the implementation of the resolution at the national level, while allowing for better informed definition of relevant capacity-building needs. We support this idea and call upon the Council to endow itself with more effective oversight on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including through the establishment of a monitoring mechanism with appropriate leadership to ensure its active engagement with all aspects of the work of the Council.

We believe that, after seven years, the time has come to realize the establishment of such a mechanism. Strengthening the protection of women and girls in conflict-affected societies from rape and other forms of sexual violence should be important enough to translate the many calls for the creation of such a mechanism into concrete action.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Israel.

**Mr. Gillerman** (Israel): At the outset, allow me to congratulate the Ghanaian presidency on its able stewardship of the Council this month and to thank it for convening this open debate on women and peace and security.

As we mark the seventh anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), I also wish to thank the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and Ms. Rachel Mayanja for their informative statements.

Next year, the international community will reach another milestone when it celebrates the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Declaration, universally recognized as an international instrument of the highest importance, is of increasing significance as a unifying factor among all peoples and cultures. It remains a living document that continues to inform and inspire the struggle for rights and freedoms of all people around the world. In this regard, the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000) lives and breathes within the Declaration.

My delegation would like to commend the efforts of the various entities within the United Nations, among them, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women for their efforts in promoting resolution 1325 (2000) and for all that they do to make the voices of women heard.

Israel strongly believes that women must play an equal role in all aspects of State and civil society. We have no doubt that the advancement and progress of women will translate into nothing less than the advancement and progress for all. As such, Israel remains committed to the principles and goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the principles outlined in the World Summit Outcome

(General Assembly resolution 60/1) adopted by our leaders in 2005.

The deliberate acts of violence against women and the girl child, especially in situations of armed conflict, are particularly alarming. Women, and children, for that matter, are severely affected by the consequences of armed conflict. We have even seen and are continuing, unfortunately, to see the heinous crime of rape used as a political weapon. The severity of such graphic exploitation, abuse and violation of human rights cannot be overstated, and the perpetrators of these crimes must be brought to justice.

Israel welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567) and its System-wide Action Plan review and update. Similarly, we are pleased at the Secretary-General's efforts to identify women as candidates for senior level positions within the United Nations system, with particular attention given to special representatives. We hope to hear in the future of new appointments of women in senior roles.

With this in mind, we commend the appointment of our former colleague, Ambassador Ellen Løj, as the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia. I am sure that her impressive tenure at the United Nations, and especially in the Security Council, will have prepared her well for this important mission, and we wish her well.

Nevertheless, a great deal remains to be done. National mechanisms and machineries for the advancement of women need to be strengthened to ensure women's active participation in public policy formulation on matters of peace and security. The mainstreaming of gender into all policies and programmes at the international and national levels is a crucial factor in the prevention of sexual discrimination, exploitation and abuse. If women are ever to truly see their needs recognized and their interests represented in peace accords, they must have access to peace negotiations from the earliest possible stages. In that regard, Israel has been working through Government and non-governmental channels to increase awareness and amplify the voice of women in peace negotiations and conflict resolution.

In Israel, implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) continues on a variety of levels, including but not limited to distributing Hebrew translations of the resolution, distributing and disseminating information on the resolution to national, regional and non-governmental organization (NGO) bodies, campaigning to raise awareness through public relations work and media coverage and monitoring and documenting the impact of conflict on women and girls. Similarly, the Israeli Women's Equal Rights Law was amended in past years in the spirit of resolution 1325 (2000) mandating that the Israeli Government include women in any group appointed to peacebuilding negotiations and conflict resolution.

I wish to note that this commitment is not merely in theory, but also in practice. We do not just preach it; we practice it. My Minister, Ms. Tzipi Livni, Vice-Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, was appointed just last week to lead the negotiations with the Palestinians. Due to the important choices being made on the ground — namely, the existence of a Palestinian Government that accepts the Quartet principles and is committed to a dialogue and process with Israel — a sense of renewed hope and optimism can be felt on the ground. As Israeli and Palestinian leaders continue to meet, our goal is to reach an understanding on the widest possible common ground in order to enable progress on the way forward towards the realization of the two-State vision. This is for the benefit of all citizens of the region, men and women alike. Similarly, there is a movement of Israeli and Palestinian women working together from across civil society and the political spectrum to advocate for peace. The recognition and effectiveness of such advocacy organizations and NGOs is a testament to the vibrancy of Israeli democracy and pluralism, and Israel takes great pride in their leadership.

Spinoza, the famed seventeenth-century philosopher, once said that peace is not the absence of war: it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence and justice. Indeed, peace is a holistic state of existence. To truly achieve it, one half of the population cannot be ignored. Only with full participation of women in all aspects of conflict resolution, peacemaking and security will there be a viable social, economic and political subsoil for democratization, sustainable development and peace to grow.

Israel, for its part, is determined that women should play an increasingly active role in peace negotiations and is committed to advancing the role of women in all aspects of society. Israel is hopeful that an enhanced role for women in peace negotiations will build lasting bridges of understanding with our neighbours and usher in a dawn of harmony and prosperity for all.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

**Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, at the outset, I would like to thank you for convening this open debate on women and peace and security and to extend our gratitude to the Secretariat for the report submitted today to the Council on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related plans and programmes (S/2007/567).

The report of the Secretary-General undoubtedly reflects an enormous effort to follow up implementation of the 2005-2007 Action Plan, as well as to formulate the new Action Plan for 2008-2009. It reflects growing interest by all entities of the United Nations system, along with necessary efficiency, in particular on the part of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and other relevant bodies.

Yet there are many questions that require responses in order to achieve the desired coherence among activities at the level of the Organization and the activities of Member States, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the private sector in implementation of the resolution and the Action Plan. First and foremost, this requires effectively addressing the institutional gaps and challenges identified by the Secretary-General and relating to internal administrative matters. These are caused, on the one hand, by a lack of non-core resources from voluntary contributions, and on the other, by the lack of a clear vision of the ultimate result, which differs from case to case. Another cause is the lack of effective reporting and evaluation on the substantive impact of the Organization's efforts on the ground. Lastly, there is a failure to recognize the vital role that can be played by the Peacebuilding Commission in designing the conceptual framework for addressing this issue, particularly in post-conflict situations, as reflected in operative paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 61/143.

Furthermore, it requires us — not only in the Security Council but throughout the United Nations — to formulate a clear system-wide action plan to deal with the issues with the participation of all principal organs, through the simultaneous adoption of resolutions by the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council.

The serious issue before us does not need scrutiny by Member States through the establishment of a monitoring mechanism to guarantee full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and the Action Plan, as suggested by the Secretary-General. Rather, what it needs is a collective international effort to strengthen the capacity of States to help with implementation and to provide the financial resources and technical expertise needed to make progress possible.

Egypt attaches great importance to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) within a holistic framework that mobilizes the efforts of all Governments, civil society and the private sector, and is fully prepared to see the resolution implemented throughout the Arab world and Africa. The Government of Egypt has supported many activities related to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), the Action Plan and the related programmes and has assisted other countries on the African continent to address the matter effectively. We have done this by providing direct technical assistance and trilateral cooperation with other partners. The Suzanne Mubarak Women's International Peace Movement, one of the major non-governmental organizations in this field, has provided great assistance in that regard. It has done so by convening a series of regional meetings through which governmental and non-governmental organizations support women's activities in achieving peace and stability in the Arab world. In particular, those organizations support the role of women in launching effective political negotiations aimed at reaching settlements to ongoing international political issues.

The Government of Egypt is also making great efforts to strengthen the status of women in all fields, especially in such vital areas as peacekeeping and peacebuilding in post-conflict situations, which require particular attention and follow-up.

Egypt will continue to play its role in national, regional and international efforts to strengthen the status of women, in coordination with the main bodies responsible for women's issues within the Organization.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

**Mr. Heller** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this recurring open debate on women, peace and security. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567) on recent activities with regard to that issue.

In the seven years that have transpired since the historic adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), many countries, international organizations and civil society organizations have spoken in the Security Council to reaffirm their commitment to achieve the full implementation of the resolution. We appreciate the progress made and the work done by the Organization in the area of capacity building to improve the protection of women's rights, as well as its efforts to develop a methodology that will make possible more accurate measurement of the progress made in this field. However, we are concerned that the will that has been expressed in that regard has not resulted in an integrated and coordinated strategy, either within the United Nations system or in affected States, that would make it possible to overcome the diffused nature of efforts undertaken.

We completely agree that countries themselves have a great deal of responsibility for mainstreaming the gender perspective into peace and security issues. It is only through joint implementation of concerted efforts at the international and national levels that we will be able to achieve substantial benefits for women affected by armed conflict.

Women are not passive actors in highly complex emergency situations. They are nevertheless especially vulnerable to the marginalization, poverty and psychological and physical violence that such situations entail. Moreover, women often become targets of war, as they are perceived to embody the cultural and ethnic identities of their societies. In becoming pillars of their communities in times of conflict, their well-being and integrity are intrinsically bound up with the protection of men and children. It is for that reason that implementing the commitments contained in resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be seen as a matter limited solely to ensuring the protection of part of society, but rather as a precondition for achieving sustainable peace for all. Carrying out that task requires short-, medium- and long-term measures. I shall now refer to those that Mexico believes to be the most urgent.

First, there is a need to ratify and unconditionally implement the existing international framework — especially as regards international humanitarian law — including human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Second, all peacekeeping operations approved by the Security Council should include mandates with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Third, we must strengthen the International Criminal Court, so that, as feasible, it can try those guilty of sexual violence in the context of armed conflict — which is a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute.

Fourth, we must implement measures in all areas to ensure security and access for humanitarian personnel to populations in need of assistance in conflict areas.

Fifth, there is a need for sustained cooperation and coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and United Nations bodies carrying out programmes to benefit women on the ground, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Population Fund.

Sixth, we must establish across-the-board mandatory training programmes in gender issues for United Nations staff working in the areas of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.

Seventh, we must put in place effective domestic legislative frameworks to eradicate impunity and establish educational programmes and awareness-raising campaigns on the issue of women's rights, in order to eliminate cultural prejudices against women and empower women to defend themselves against abuses to which they may be subject.

Eighth, and last, we must systematically include women — especially from non-governmental organizations — in the taking of decisions during peace and reconstruction processes. Mexico commends the experience of UNIFEM in that regard. We have therefore contributed to the work it is doing to ensure the participation of women from civil society in Haiti's peace process, which could be a model in other situations.

Before I conclude, I would like to express Mexico's deep concern at the growing number of cases of sexual abuse against women during armed conflict, and even in the process of peacebuilding. Such recent cases as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and Iraq, to mention a few, cannot be tolerated either by the Governments of those countries or by the international community. The international community must take concrete steps to eradicate such practices.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was the outcome of the political resolve of the members of the Security Council to provide protection for the millions of women affected by armed conflict. The time has come to translate the resolution into real action on the ground.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Zambia.

**Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia): I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the member States of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) — namely, Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zimbabwe and my own country, Zambia.

We would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Special Adviser to the Secretary General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their introductory statements, which were very instructive.

SADC welcomes the opportunity, on the seventh anniversary of the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), to participate in this open debate on women, peace and security, focused on achieving coherent and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). As we are all aware, the resolution, among other things, calls for the incorporation of a gender perspective in negotiating and implementing peace agreements, planning refugee camps and peacekeeping operations, and reconstructing war-torn societies. Today's debate therefore provides us with an opportunity to assess the concrete and specific efforts in the implementation of the resolution at all levels and the role of the Security Council in such efforts.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) by the Security Council and the six subsequent presidential statements on women, peace and security provide a solid framework for action in all areas of the peace process. The importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security cannot be overstated. While some progress has been made in the implementation of the resolution, greater coordinated efforts are required to achieve the goal of full implementation. In that regard, SADC calls on the international community to render sustained support in the development of national action plans, including financial and human resources, that will eventually drive the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We thank the Secretary-General for his report, contained in document S/2007/567, on women and peace and security. The report reviews and monitors the implementation of the 2005-2007 United Nations System-wide Action Plan and identifies gaps and challenges, including in the areas of funding of gender projects and insufficient institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming. We must address those challenges if we are to obtain the desired results. We welcome the recommendations contained in the report, which we believe will contribute to the acceleration of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We would like to commend the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security, and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for their commendable work in coming up with a holistic and coherent 2008-2009 United Nations System-wide Action Plan, which will serve as a results-based programme and monitoring and reporting tool. The responsibility of ensuring the full realization of the Plan rests with the international community. The Security Council should hold national Governments accountable for the implementation of the Action Plan.

The high number of victims of violence continues to be a concern for SADC. We are saddened that women continue to bear the brunt of grave violations of human rights, including violence and sexual abuses. We condemn all those parties that perpetuate acts of violence and abuse against women and children. We call for the speedy investigation of all cases of violence and sexual abuse, especially those committed against women and children. The culture of impunity must be stopped by, among other things, bringing to justice all the perpetrators.

SADC is encouraged by the progress on mainstreaming gender in relevant policies and programmes on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR). It is necessary to recognize the needs of women and girl ex-combatants in the DDR process and to ensure that their concerns are taken on board from the planning stages. We commend the work that has been done by the United Nations Children's Fund in reintegration projects that has led to the release of girls from the armed forces in various countries.

We commend the various United Nations agencies that have undertaken capacity-building efforts, including the development of the training models. We would, however, request that there be synergy and coherence in the various training models produced. We wish to reiterate that awareness of resolution 1325 (2000) needs to be broadened and that capacities at the national level to implement the resolution need to be enhanced. In that endeavour, we wish to underscore the importance of building capacity at the local level and, in particular, the capacity of national and local women's groups on the ground.

Experience has shown that the participation of women in peace processes produces positive results, especially because they, together with children, are the major victims of atrocities committed in conflict. Women need to hold decision-making positions. It is imperative that women be encouraged and supported to run for offices, especially in countries emerging from conflicts. In that regard, we wish to commend the work undertaken by United Nations agencies in facilitating the promotion and effective participation of women in decision-making processes.

In conclusion, I wish to state that SADC remains committed to the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). We in the international community have an obligation to ensure that the rights of women the world over are protected and that their place in all aspects of the peace process is assured. It is their equal participation and their full involvement that will contribute to the effective maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace and security.

**The President**: I call on the representative of Colombia.

**Ms. Blum** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to express my delegation's gratitude to you, Sir, for having convened this open debate on women and peace and security, and for following up on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

It is of the utmost importance to share experiences and points of view vis-à-vis the design of a coherent and effective strategy for implementing resolution 1325 (2000). In its capacity as a member of the "friends of 1325", Colombia attaches special importance to that process, in which it has participated since its earliest stages. Our participation is guided by the conviction that the effective promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women in the areas of peace and security is critical. The United Nations system can effectively contribute to the fulfilment of the responsibilities incumbent on States in those areas through specific cooperation initiatives.

In that regard, we note with satisfaction the Secretary-General's acknowledgement in his report of 12 September, 2007, of the significant progress that has been achieved in the implementation of the aforementioned resolution. The report states that

> "One of the major lessons learned from the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2005-2007 is that without concerted efforts with Governments and civil society at the country level, the implementation of the resolution would remain elusive" (*A/2007/567, para. 36*).

That is particularly true for Colombia, where interaction between civil society and the United Nations system has been an ongoing factor in the drafting and implementation of comprehensive approaches to programmes for the advancement of women and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Through democratic security policies, economic recovery, social equity and human development, Colombia has made notable progress in that field.

In Colombia, the Office of the Presidential Adviser for Women's Equity and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs established a series of round tables on women, peace and security, which have conducted assessments and promoted awareness of resolution 1325 (2000) and of the country report on its implementation. A group of women from different regions have also received training in conflict prevention and conflict resolution. The constant support of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the help of many non-governmental organizations have enabled the Government to conduct an important number of activities, initiatives and projects designed to promote and implement resolution 1325 (2000) and to mainstream gender issues in national policies.

That is reflected in the National Development Plan 2006-2010, and I would like to highlight some of the Plan's activities with respect to affirmative action, a cross-cutting approach to gender and social reactivation.

Colombia is implementing an affirmative action policy entitled "Women — Builders of peace and development". The policy prioritizes goals related to employment and enterprise development, education and culture, political participation and the prevention of violence against women. It includes more than 100 protection measures, to be applied by various authorities, to counter domestic violence, marriage breakdown and labour discrimination.

The cross-cutting approach to gender involves all State agencies. Its results are reflected in laws, jurisprudence and public policies with a gender perspective, in strengthening institutional mechanisms working on women's issues, and in consolidating disaggregated information systems, among other things. I would like to highlight four structural strategies within the social reactivation policy that promote greater gender equality: human capital development and employment, consolidation of the social security system, a network for comprehensive attention to the population living in extreme poverty and the promotion of microcredit.

I would also like to highlight the helpful role that the Organization of American States has played at the regional level, through the Inter-American Commission of Women. Following up on the mandates of the Inter-American Program on the Promotion of Women's Human Rights and Gender Equity and Equality and the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Commission conducted the Training Course on Gender, Conflict and Peace-Building for the Andean and Central American regions. The recommendations of that project are particularly relevant for our debate today, since they underline how it is possible to build an agenda from the regional perspective that contributes to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, it is stated that Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the resolution. With that understanding, Colombia appreciates the role that the Security Council has played in guiding and revitalizing, through resolution 1325 (2000) and its plan of action, the process of consultation with concerned entities of the United Nations system and civil society organizations to cooperate with Governments to meet their commitments within the framework of that resolution.

On the other hand, we understand that in pursuing these issues, the Security Council contributes substantially to the preservation of peace and security, which supports its central mandate as contained in the United Nations Charter. Colombia welcomes the recommendation contained in the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security that the United Nations system accelerate the development of a comprehensive knowledge and information system, accessible to Member States, in order to share good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the resolution. That type of initiative should be added in a positive manner to the national and regional initiatives aimed at strengthening national capacity-building for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We also believe that broad and inclusive intergovernmental consultations concerning analysis of the gender architecture and the advancement of women, and consensus among States, are essential preconditions for ensuring that the models and practices adopted are properly legitimate and effective.

In that regard, and particularly concerning the possibility that accountability mechanisms may be established in the context of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), we underscore the contribution of the General Assembly to strengthening the cooperation with States in those complex tasks.

At the same time, we note with reservations the suggestions that have been made concerning the recommendation of the Secretary-General that Member States strengthen monitoring and accountability for the national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in particular through the establishment of a Security Council mechanism to monitor national implementation. My country considers that this recommendation is not appropriate, because it would eventually result in the creation of a mechanism whereby the Security Council would single out countries on the basis of thematic issues that should, according to the United Nations Charter, be discussed and dealt with in the General Assembly. We agree to the additional work that should be done towards the protection of the rights of women, as long as they remain under the purview of the existing United Nations forums in the area of human rights.

The approach that results from a mechanism such as the one that has been suggested does not seem to be the most appropriate for achieving sustainable solutions. We would always rather have cooperation, constructive dialogue and real support to countries when they are dealing with issues that concern human rights.

Seven years after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), Colombia has achieved important progress in strengthening the role and capacity of women and in the fulfilment of their rights. For our country, it is a matter of great importance to continue to have the support of the United Nations Systems on these issues, in the context of elaborating a positive agenda. It is in that spirit that my delegation will continue to actively participate in the consideration of this important issue.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

**Mr. Pfanzelter** (Austria): Austria commends you, Mr. President, and the Ghanaian presidency, for holding this open debate on women and peace and security, because we all agree that women are affected severely by conflict. All too often, however, they have no say in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and reconstruction. The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) seven years ago was a milestone in acknowledging the crucial role that women should have in all efforts to promote peace. Despite certain developments, the full potential of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding has not been harnessed so far. There is no question that we need to address that gap as a matter of urgency.

Women across the world are ready to bear a key responsibility in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Allow me to give you an example: women in the Arab world and throughout the Middle East have become a driving force for political, social, economic and cultural development. The international conference on "Women leaders — networking for peace and security in the Middle East" held in Vienna in May 2007 proved that women are ready to reach out for dialogue to establish networks for overcoming barriers and finding sustainable solutions. The Austrian Foreign Minister, Ursula Plassnik, has therefore raised the need for sustained involvement of women with the new Envoy of the Middle East Quartet.

Austria has also invited women leaders from Serbia and Kosovo to meet in Vienna in November at a symposium entitled "Shaping our European future" in order to contribute to peaceful coexistence and cooperation in the region and to a common European future with Serbia and Kosovo. The role of women within the United Nations system needs further improvement. Until very recently there was not a single woman among the more than 50 United Nations Special Representatives and Envoys for conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Women Leaders' Network, co-chaired by Austrian Foreign Minister Ursula Plassnik and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, adopted at its recent meeting in Vienna a set of recommendations on the empowerment of women in the area of conflict resolution and peacebuilding. One of its key demands is a fair share of international mediation and peacebuilding positions for women. The recommendations were brought to the attention of the Secretary-General (A/61/1036). We are encouraged by his strong support and the recent appointment of Ellen Margrethe Løj as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia and of three women as Deputy Special Representatives. We hope to see more appointments of women to such leadership positions in the near future. Of course, we the Member States, have to make sure to nominate more female candidates for such positions.

We are deeply shocked by the recent reports of an unprecedented wave of mass rapes of women in the

Eastern Congo. Widespread sexual and gender-based violence is ongoing in other conflict and post-conflict situations as well. Those acts are horrendous crimes, for which those responsible must be brought to justice. They also have far-reaching implications for the development of affected societies in general. For that reason, Austria is increasing its support for campaigns against sexual violence and assistance programmes for victims of sexual violence in the Eastern Congo.

Austria strongly supports the zero-tolerance policy concerning sexual abuse and exploitation by United Nations personnel. It is simply unacceptable that peacekeepers and field personnel are still involved in cases of sexual exploitation and abuse. We therefore lend our full support to the ongoing work on a draft policy statement and comprehensive strategy on assistance and support to victims of sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations staff and related personnel.

Effectively mainstreaming a gender perspective into all peace and security issues is a prerequisite for addressing the reality of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. That requires an intricate understanding of the gender dimension and comprehensive information and data on the particular situation of women. To that end, the Security Council should consider — as previous speakers have already indicated — the establishment of a permanent monitoring mechanism on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In August this year, the Government of Austria adopted a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan was developed in close consultation with all stakeholders, including non-governmental organizations and academics. It foresees actions to be taken at the national, regional and international levels, including the following actions: the percentage of women among Austrian personnel in peace missions shall be raised, including by offering specific incentives to women; training programmes for Austrian personnel in peace missions shall be reviewed in order to systematically address gender aspects and the rights of women, including a firm zero-tolerance policy on sexual abuse and exploitation.

Austria will continue to lobby for the full implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in the European Union and other regional and international organizations. Austrian development cooperation in post-conflict situations will continue to focus on gender-specific programmes.

The Austrian action plan is designed as a living document and will be reviewed annually. We are, therefore, very interested to share experiences and good practices with all countries. I am confident that the national action plan will be an effective tool for reinforcing our efforts to fully integrate gender aspects into our activities in the field of peace and security.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Germany.

**Mr. Matussek** (Germany): Germany commends the Ghanaian presidency for holding this year's Security Council debate on women and peace and security, marking the seventh anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). Germany associates itself with the statement made by the presidency of the European Union and would like to add the following remarks. Violence against women is one of the most widespread violations of human rights. Germany believes that it is imperative to eradicate violence against women and girls in all its forms. We are deeply concerned about the pervasive and sometimes systematic use of sexual violence against women, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, especially in conflict situations. We must increase our efforts at the national and international levels to find adequate responses to the problem — for the victims and for the perpetrators. We want a zero-tolerance policy.

In that context, Germany welcomes the initiative entitled Stop Rape Now: United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, which was launched in the beginning of 2007. One month ago, the German Federal Government presented its second action plan to combat violence against women. The action plan not only sets goals and targets to combat violence against women on a national basis, but also addresses the issue in the context of international cooperation within the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. The action plan contains various references to resolution 1325 (2000).

Germany welcomes the initiatives of several countries, including Security Council members, to develop a mechanism to ensure the systematic integration and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the work of the Council, including resolutions, reporting requests and field missions. In that context, we welcome the fact that the

Peacebuilding Commission, Peacebuilding Support Office and Peacebuilding Fund have integrated a gender perspective into their work. Gender equality was identified as a critical cross-cutting issue for peace consolidation in both of the countries on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission: Burundi and Sierra Leone. Now, a dedicated effort is needed to implement it — in the field as well as in New York.

The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women — whether in the context of conflict resolution or in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals — is an essential part of the United Nations mandate. A coherent and effective implementation of that mandate, including Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), needs a coherent and effective gender architecture. Germany supports the concept paper on the subject prepared by the Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro.

Let me re-emphasize that Germany, as a friend of resolution 1325 (2000), is deeply committed to the vision of that landmark resolution and continues to undertake various efforts to realize that vision. The German Government will account for its efforts and will present, on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on 25 November, a detailed report to our Parliament on German contributions to implement resolution 1325 (2000). The report will document a variety of measures contributing to the implementation of the resolution both at the national and the global levels — ranging from efforts to increase representation of women in all decision-making mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict to concrete projects aimed at ending violence against women all over the world.

Many of these projects have been conducted in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Civil society plays a crucial role in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), and I wish to emphasize how greatly we welcome NGO participation in and contributions to our common efforts to work for women's equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

**Mr. McNee** (Canada): I would like to express Canada's appreciation to you, Mr. President, and to Ghana for convening this open debate on women and peace and security, an annual tradition commemorating the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

Canada, as Chair of the Group of Friends of resolution 1325 (2000), would like to suggest that this year the Security Council begin a new tradition of assessing the implementation of this important resolution in a deliberate and concerted way throughout the year.

The United Nations System-wide Action Plan, alongside national implementation strategies, represents an important first step towards meeting the need for effective monitoring of and accountability for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). However, the ongoing obstacles to its implementation, both for the United Nations and at the national level, are now familiar to us all. The main challenge is that the tenets of the resolution have not been systematically institutionalized and accountability mechanisms are not in place.

We need only look at the situation of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to understand the urgent need to implement resolution 1325 (2000) systematically and to monitor its implementation. The international community is well aware of the difficulties in reliably quantifying such violence, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo is no exception. Large areas of territory in the volatile eastern areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo are beyond the reach of the civil authorities, humanitarian agencies or relief services. This leaves many victims unaccounted for. Despite thousands of women having been raped, the prevailing culture of impunity allows the problem to continue unabated with virtually no prosecutions. The scale of the problem, including the lack of prevention, protection and punishment, is so immense that the social fabric of entire communities is being torn apart.

The Security Council can make a genuine difference here. It has a crucial role to play in the effective, timely and systematic implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Over the past few years, many Member States have stressed the need for an effective monitoring mechanism. That point has been made repeatedly and convincingly in today's debate. We could not be more in need of a monitoring mechanism than we are today.

Canada has previously called on the Council to establish a mechanism to monitor its own actions in integrating resolution 1325 (2000) and other related resolutions into its daily work. Canada calls on the Council to establish such a monitoring mechanism in the form of a committee or working group with a mandate to regularly and actively monitor progress in implementing 1325 (2000) throughout the Council's work.

In his 2007 report (S/2007/567), the Secretary-General concluded that without concerted efforts by Governments and civil society at the country level, implementation of the resolution would continue to lag. In order to ensure a focus on women's rights and equality issues within the Security Council's country- and region-specific work, Canada calls upon the Council to commit itself to regular consultations with representatives of women's organizations in the countries that are on its agenda. We recommend that it also make fuller use of the analytical support and guidance available from the specialized United Nations entities working on the issues encompassed by resolution 1325 (2000), ranging from women's political participation to the elimination of violence against girls and women.

(*spoke in French*)

Canada joins others in stressing the importance of such a monitoring mechanism and the essential nature of the systematic collection of data that is cross-classified by sex, presenting information separately for women and men, girls and boys, in order to facilitate the proper functioning of such a monitoring mechanism. The Security Council needs to ensure that information on grave violations of women's and girls' human rights and their participation in peace and reconstruction processes is produced and utilized in the Council's work. The Security Council should ensure that information on violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, be included in all reports of the Secretary-General to the Council on the situations in individual countries, and in thematic reports. Additionally, there is a clear need for specific reports on sexual violence in conflict, as well as other aspects of resolution 1325 (2000), in order to better inform Council deliberations.

The creation of a monitoring mechanism and the regular presentation of disaggregated data and status reports will increase the Council's capacity to design and implement peace support mandates to better respond to such violence and to ensure the integration of to prevent gender-based violence in the work of United Nations country teams.

In conclusion, Canada will continue to support the Council's implementation of its commitments, including in country-specific contexts, and to support efforts to enhance Council and wider international action in this area.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

**Mr. Mohamad** (Sudan): Allow me at the outset, Sir, to join previous speakers in congratulating you on a very active Security Council presidency under your delegation's able stewardship, including the holding of today's debate on women and peace and security, which coincides with the seventh anniversary of the adoption of the Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

The aforementioned resolution laid the basis for cross-cutting, in-depth reflections on gender issues in conflict, post-conflict and peacebuilding situations. The resolution sets out a comprehensive plan of action on the status of women in the context of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in accordance with the obligations set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the provisions of the resolution adopted at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, on women, development and peace, in order to

> "Ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution." (*General Assembly resolution S-23/3, para. 86 (b)*)

In this connection, the issue of women and armed conflict should not overshadow the broader issue of women, peace and social development, including the right to development by way of addressing the root causes.

We note the Security Council's request to the Secretary-General to submit a system-wide action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000) (see

S/PRST/2004/40). The Plan includes major areas of action in the field of women and peace and security. It provides a framework for relevant inter-agency activities aimed at addressing this issue through strategies to promote a gender perspective, confidence-building and the development of local and regional women's organizations to complement the role of the United Nations at the regional and local levels.

Promoting a gender perspective in areas of conflict requires that reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes incorporate the promotion of practical participation by women in those areas by providing technical assistance, particularly training programmes for women in the fields of health and education. In that respect, we rely on the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies — including the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and UNICEF — to coordinate their inter-agency programmes for women and girls. We would like to underscore the need to abide by the principle of national ownership of those programmes and activities, which must respond to national priorities and must focus on the capacity-building of local institutions in charge of implementing such programmes.

At the national level, women's empowerment has been one of the Sudan's top priorities. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement and the Darfur Peace Agreement both included provisions safeguarding the role and the active participation of women in peacebuilding and in the implementation of the relevant provisions of the two Agreements. Those provisions are premised on our traditions and values, which accord a particularly prominent position to women.

Moreover, since our national independence more than five decades ago, Sudanese women have had pioneering roles in, and have made contributions to, all aspects of Sudanese political, economic, social and cultural life. This year, those achievements culminated in the adoption of our first national strategy for the empowerment of women, which is fully aligned with the main pillars of the Beijing Platform for Action. I would also like to assure the Council that, as our country is currently preparing for the decisive Darfur peace talks to be held in Libya less than a week from now, the participation of women in the peace process would undoubtedly provide the dynamism and direction needed for the success of the talks.

We are hopeful that today's Council debate will have a positive impact on the status and the role of women in today's world. However, we would also like to propose that all pertinent proposals and suggestions presented throughout today's debate be used to enrich strategies currently employed by various United Nations stakeholders and bodies. We would also like to caution against unpleasant trends in this Organization aimed at politicizing women's issues in order to settle political scores. In that case, the victims would only be women, whom we are trying to assist.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Argentina.

**Mr. Argüello** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Permit me to begin by thanking the Ghanaian presidency for organizing this open debate, which reflects the Security Council's commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We also welcome the overview given us concerning progress and gaps in the implementation process, as well as the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567).

Within the framework of a perspective focused on human rights, Argentina accords high priority to the situation of women in conflict and to women's participation in peace processes and in the peacebuilding phase. Resolution 1325 (2000) is the legal framework enabling such participation at both the national and international levels.

From the perspective of the United Nations system, we believe that we must strengthen efforts to systematically implement resolution 1325 (2000) in all areas of work, continuing to mainstream a gender perspective in all Council resolutions and in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission. We commend the efforts being made in that regard, particularly the development and updating of the Action Plan for 2008-2009. We believe it is necessary to build on those foundations and to intensify efforts to achieve greater impact in the United Nations system and tangible progress in the situation of women and of gender equality.

As a result of our own experience, we recognize the importance of launching national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Such plans must be developed through a participatory process and must include mechanisms for monitoring and accountability on the part of Governments to ensure not only that a greater number of women participate in a country's decision-making processes, but also that their complaints and needs are taken into account at all levels of the State, particularly in institutional reform processes, including reform of the legislative, judicial and security systems.

In that connection, we wish to highlight the fact that Argentina has fully incorporated United Nations recommendations on gender issues into all aspects of its participation in peacekeeping operations. Last year, we completed our institutional revision, which provided women with access to all ranks of Argentina's security forces, at both the non-commissioned officer and officer levels. Likewise, Argentine women continue to occupy an important place in the troop contingents participating in peacekeeping operations. For example, we can say that more than 110 women have participated in the Argentine contingents in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and that Argentina's first female military observer is currently working in the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus. Furthermore, the Argentine Centre for Joint Peacekeeping Operations Training includes in its teaching a gender perspective in administration and in the training it provides.

We cannot fail to highlight Argentina's commitment to combating violence and discrimination against women and girls. In our country, that commitment is becoming a State policy whereby State bodies with competence in this area include civil society organizations. In that connection, we reaffirm our support for the Secretary-General's decision that the United Nations should play a stronger and more prominent role in efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, as well as for the launching of a global campaign of the Secretary-General on violence against women at the end of 2007.

In conclusion, we believe it is imperative to identify concrete measures to enhance the effectiveness of our commitment to the situation of women and of gender equality by ensuring women's participation in peacebuilding processes and by establishing mechanisms for accountability at both the national and international levels with respect to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We believe that an implementation mechanism within the framework of the Council, which could be based on the model adopted in resolution 1612 (2005), on children in armed conflict, will be an essential and effective tool to that end.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of the Republic of Korea.

**Mr. Kim Hyun Chong** (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in expressing my sincere gratitude to you, Mr. President, for holding this open debate on women and peace and security.

Over the seven years since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women, peace and security, much has been achieved in terms of implementation by Member States, civil society and the United Nations system. The Secretary-General's report (S/2007/567) is a compilation of the reports on progress made by each entity. It notes, for example, the adoption by five entities of action plans for gender mainstreaming in their work on conflict prevention, the implementation of early-warning mechanisms by seven entities and the appointment of gender advisers in eleven peacekeeping missions.

Unfortunately, however, these efforts were rather fragmented and incoherent. So far, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is far from sufficient. Women continue to be excluded from or marginalized in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes. There has been some integration of gender perspectives, but it has not been systematic, nor has it adequately encompassed all facets of the process, including conflict prevention, early warning, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian responses, post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Most disturbing to the Republic of Korea is the fact that sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict is growing in many places. My delegation is particularly appalled by occurrences of systematic rape and sexual violence.

Paragraph 10 of the resolution

> "Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict."

Paragraph 11 emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes, including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls.

The brutal facts of sexual violence against women and girls in many armed conflicts make it horribly clear that the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) has fallen far short of its intended aims.

My delegation believes that this poor implementation is not the fault of the Secretary-General or of the United Nations entities; rather, it is the Security Council's lack of accountability and the failure to implement the resolution.

The Secretary-General's report also identifies as key challenges fragmentation and insufficient institutional capacity for oversight and accountability for system performance. The report explains that the current action plan was not established as a tool for monitoring, evaluation and accountability, and its revised action plan attempts to fill that gap. While we appreciate this effort to improve reporting, we do not believe it is the solution to the greater problem.

What we most urgently need is a dedicated and effective Security Council mechanism for overall integration and implementation of the resolution in the Council's work. This mechanism would bear the responsibility to provide directives and to oversee, monitor and evaluate such implementation. Secondly, the Security Council urgently needs to address the serious situation of the sexual violation of women and girls.

It is the view of the Republic of Korea that, in implementing the resolution, we should consider regional approaches, including the utilization of existing regional arrangements. Effective regional entities could provide added value through their established networks, solidarity, communication and accessibility. However, we must keep in mind that the ultimate accountability lies with the Security Council, not with regional entities. Therefore, regional entities should play a complementary role, not act as substitutes. Nevertheless, as long as the participation of regional entities is making a substantial contribution to implementation, the regional approach will remain a valid one.

In addition, my country hopes that the dialogue for system-wide coherence regarding the gender architecture will be finalized as soon as possible to expedite a coherent response from the United Nations system across the board for women's empowerment.

My delegation looks forward to a concrete outcome from today's discussion. Through substantive improvements in the implementation mechanism and the strong will of the Security Council to end grave sexual violence in armed conflict, we can make real progress in implementation and reconfirm the accountability of the Security Council. The Republic of Korea is fully committed to ensuring the realization of the United Nations promise to women in armed conflicts.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

**Ms. Lisson** (Australia): At the outset, I would like to make clear that an election has been called in Australia and that the Government is currently operating under caretaker provisions.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is an affirmation of the important role of women in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Women's participation is crucial to the viability and success of peace talks, peace agreements, recovery from conflict and long-term peacebuilding. Women's involvement means that not only are the serious issues of disarmament and demobilization addressed, but the equally serious social and economic issues that are essential to long-term, sustainable peace, are also dealt with.

Australia recognizes that. In March this year, the Australian Government launched the new gender equality policy for the Australian aid programme. This policy's overall goal is to reduce poverty by advancing gender equality and empowering women. The policy sets out what Australia will do and provides sample results on gender equality that can be incorporated into Government programmes and initiatives. Two of the key outcomes the policy targets are the equal participation of women in decision-making and leadership, including in fragile States and conflict situations, and the advancement of gender equality in regional cooperation efforts. Working towards these outcomes will help implement resolution 1325 (2000).

Over the past five years, Australia has continued to fund a number of activities in the Asia-Pacific region aimed at implementing resolution 1325 (2000). The people-to-people links forged as a result of these activities have provided a platform for women's participation in decision-making for peace and security at all levels — community, national and regional.

For example, Australia supported the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat Regional Workshop on Gender, Conflict, Peace and Security last year. This workshop, the first of its kind in the Pacific, was attended by policymakers, representatives from military and law enforcement agencies, and women's nongovernmental organizations from all 16 Pacific Island Forum countries. The workshop succeeded in putting the issue of resolution 1325 (2000) on the regional agenda, and the outcomes are now guiding follow-up work on gender, peace and security in the region.

In another example, femLINKpacific, together with counterparts in a number of Pacific island countries, is part of a regional women's network on resolution 1325 (2000). Through assistance provided by Australia, femLINKpacific's regional media network has launched a resolution 1325 (2000) website to assist with the dissemination of information on resolution 1325 (2000) as widely as possible. FemLINKpacific has also established a regular resolution 1325 (2000) e-news bulletin. In addition, work has started on translating the resolution into local languages and, for the first time, stories about the resolution in the Pidgin and Tongan languages are being featured.

Australia is also funding a regional peace talks training project, through the International Women's Development Agency. The project serves to develop a national framework in three Pacific countries for the implementation of outcomes, recommendations and commitments designed to ensure gender equality in matters relating to peace and security in those countries.

Further, Australia is contributing towards a project aimed at mainstreaming gender in policies and programmes to prevent violence and conflict and to strengthen post- conflict recovery in the Pacific region. The project, jointly managed by the United Nations Development Programme Pacific Centre and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, will review existing research on violence reduction and conflict prevention from a gender perspective; undertake research in a number of Pacific countries to address gaps in existing knowledge on issues of violence and masculinities; and publish, disseminate and advocate for incorporation of the findings into work plans and policies of relevant agencies and organizations throughout the Pacific region.

Projects and ongoing regional dialogue such as those that I have just outlined increase the availability of information by and about women's contributions to improve the peace and security environment, whether at the local, national or regional level. They are examples of ways of achieving the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and ensuring that any peace support operations and security sector reforms are gender-inclusive.

Australia also continues to actively engage women in our peacebuilding efforts. Women military, police and civilian personnel play a key role in our assistance to United Nations peacekeeping missions and bilateral and regional endeavours such as the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands.

In closing, Australia is looking forward to participating in the discussion on the equal participation of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution, and in post-conflict peacebuilding, which will take place at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women session in 2008. In preparation for this discussion, the Australian Government is consulting with the Australian women's sector on measures they have undertaken to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Honduras.

**Mr. Romero Martínez** (Honduras) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. Minister, your presence here adds great value to the Council's consideration of this topic, and it also underscores the importance that your country attaches to the subject. We wish to commend you on the important initiative of convening this meeting on women and peace and security.

My country, Honduras, believes as the Security Council affirmed on 7 March 2007, that women play an important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding (see S/PRST/2007/5). We therefore condemn the harassment, attacks on security, abuse, rape and any other manifestation of violence or oppression to which women may be subject, anywhere in the world.

For this reason, we fully associate ourselves with resolution 1325 (2000). Not only do we associate ourselves with it; we also consider that its implementation should be an ongoing international obligation of States.

We support the increased representation of women at all levels, especially at decision-making levels, in conflict resolution and peace processes. We are certain, as has been indicated here in earlier speeches, that the time has come for action. We continue to hear of and to witness devastating events that once again demonstrate a lack of human sensitivity and the absence of adequate responsibility in terms of compliance with our obligations.

Our country, which is small geographically, not only values respect for the dignity of women; it is also, in keeping with its domestic legislation, trying to mainstream women in all spheres of daily activities. It wishes to see their equitable participation in the decision-making organs and is incorporating them in conjunction with all sectors, in particular civil society, in the struggle to promote the observance of human rights and respect for the rule of law and to combat marginalization and any kind of oppression or discrimination.

The humanitarian responses of the United Nations in any part of the world, as indicated by the report of the Secretary-General, must have inherent in them a common policy of incorporating gender equality programmes. In post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation, mechanisms and strategies designed for and specifically aimed at women and girls should be established. For this reason, we appreciate very much the activities that various organizations of the United Nations system are carrying out, incorporating women in their projects. Among these, we would highlight the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, which has organized virtual debates on the incorporation of gender issues into the reform of the security sector.

We also welcome the updating of the Action Plan for 2008-2009, and we hope that it will be implemented successfully.

Prevention of violence motivated by gender in armed conflicts and response to this violence must be tackled immediately. We all hope that acts of sexual exploitation and abuse will end once and for all and that everywhere in the world the values of women and of girls will be regarded as sacred, as their integrity and dignity should also be.

Consequently, the delegation of Honduras associates itself with the endeavours to achieve consistent and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The value of a human being, the value of a woman, the value of a girl, must be upheld by a collective consciousness of respect worldwide.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

**Ms. Juul** (Norway): Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is more than the text of a good decision. It is a process: a process of implementation, but also a process of awareness and understanding. It is necessary at the decision-making level, as well as at the implementation level, to constantly strive for an improved understanding of the situation and the role of women in conflict.

The process leading to resolution 1325 (2000) and the seven years that have passed since its adoption has brought about an increased understanding of the role, needs and vulnerability of women and girls. It has provided us with a useful platform to redouble efforts to ensure that women are included in peace processes, so that their needs can be addressed and the peace processes thus effectively sustained.

We must nevertheless conclude that we are still far from where we should be. Women are still too often neglected in peace negotiations; they are not allowed to participate on equal terms with men. Women's perspectives are still disregarded and their concerns and needs overlooked. Women and girls are still targets and victims of injustice, assault and sexual violence. And impunity for atrocities committed against women remains largely unresolved. Most shameful of all to us here in the United Nations, the Secretary-General's declared zero-tolerance policy is still not getting through to civilians and soldiers, and allegations of sexual misconduct by United Nations peacekeepers continue.

After seven years and commendable efforts by Member States, the United Nations and the Security

Council, we should have been doing better. We must do better. As a step in that direction, Norway encourages the Council to take the following specific decisions: first, to develop a monitoring mechanism to improve its contribution to preventing and redressing violence against women in armed conflict, as proposed by the Secretary-General; secondly, to develop a transparent mechanism to ensure that gender issues are specifically addressed and reported on in all United Nations peace operations; and thirdly, to mandate a reporting mechanism on sexual violence within peacekeeping missions.

The challenge does not stop there. We need to expand efforts beyond traditional institutional boundaries. We must realize the multidimensional aspects of consolidating peace, which will be elusive if half of the population's concerns are ignored. We cannot allow stovepiping to hinder actual progress on the ground.

Last month, here at the United Nations, the Foreign Ministers of Brazil, France, Indonesia, Norway, Senegal, South Africa and Thailand invited interested ministers and delegations to consider areas where foreign policy more or less directly affects global health. Conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding are such areas. It is well understood that improved health is an important peace dividend. In our view, it is less well understood why and how that is, or how insufficient attention to health issues may contribute to the collapse of peace processes.

In his summing up, the Foreign Minister of Norway referred to that — inter alia, by pointing to conflict as an area where sufficient attention has not been paid to focusing on health, and where specific focus could drive change, such as through the development and use of gender-specific health indicators to better assess peace and reconstruction processes; establishing road maps for health recovery as a peacemaking tool; and gaining empirical and gender-specific knowledge of the effect of health interventions at different stages of conflicts.

Given that work's focus on the health impact of conflict on women and girls, I would like to take this opportunity to insist that we still need to improve our understanding of that impact, and that we need to act on it. One neglected area in that regard is health recovery after conflict. The scars — which are often mental as well as physical — take considerable time to heal. Health services that can contribute to normalcy and hope in the lives of women and girls take considerable time to establish and to work. Conversely, ignoring the health impacts of conflict can hamper stabilization and the consolidation of peace.

We look forward to continue work with our partners to ensure that the relationship between conflict and health issues is better understood and taken into account in the areas of peacebuilding and conflict resolution. We invite members of the Security Council to join us in that effort.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

**Mrs. Mladineo** (Croatia): I would like to express my appreciation to the Ghanaian presidency of the Security Council for the holding of this open debate on women and peace and security.

Croatia has aligned itself with the statement made by the representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union, but I would like to add a few points on the matter on behalf of my Government.

Various case studies suggest that peace agreements, post-conflict reconstruction and governance have a better chance of success when women are involved, in part because women have an inclusive approach to security and address key social and economic issues that might otherwise be ignored. Let us not forget that, in all countries, women's burden of work is generally much heavier than that of men, leaving less time and energy for involvement in political life. It is therefore vital for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women to increase women's participation in politics so that two tenets of Millennium Development Goal 3 can be reached.

Croatia strongly believes that women in conflict situations need special attention by this powerful body of the United Nations. Both the report of the Secretary-General on the girl child (A/62/297) and the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (A/62/228) state the same thing: traditional attitudes towards girls in societies limit their right to express their views, and girls seeking asylum, refugee girls and internally displaced girls are in need of special protection from physical or mental violence. The Committee on the Rights of the

Child has noted with concern the lack of effective measures to prevent and prosecute the perpetrators of violence against women and girls by military personnel, including by foreign military personnel stationed on military bases.

Beginning in childhood, women face discrimination ranging from lower levels of education to prevailing social attitudes doubting their competence as decision-makers. Although many rights have been recognized for children in general, it is interesting to note that, although 185 countries are parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention is subject to one of the highest numbers of reservations of any United Nations treaty. That underscores worldwide resistance to women's rights.

Ensuring that women have a greater voice in household and community decisions is critical to fulfilling their rights, as well as the rights of children. It is beyond doubt that women would ensure the systematic inclusion of children's concerns in peacemaking and post-conflict phases. If women's and children's rights are not explicitly part of the discourse at those critical stages, they will not be addressed as they deserve.

The exclusion of women from peace negotiations and the drafting of constitutions, as well as from the effective reform of the security sector, governance and the rule of law, means that their rights and views, not only as victims but also as citizens and former combatants, will not be fully represented in post-conflict reconstruction stages. Let us not forget that even among child soldiers up to 40 per cent are girls.

At the end of 2006, women representatives from the Ministry of Women's Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan paid a visit to Croatia in the framework of cooperation between the two countries. As Afghan women representatives stated, the goal of their visit was to gather experience from Croatian women in dealing with war and post-war situations. As they explained, unemployment and an illiteracy rate of 70 per cent are among the greatest problems of their society. Those are some of the reasons why men turn to drug abuse and family violence, which often leads to the self-immolation of women.

That example shows that in the past decade women across the world have managed to become increasingly involved in conflict resolution processes. There has also been significant progress in the United Nations system in terms of policy reforms, norm-setting and institutional development. However, a large gap between policy and practice still exists, in particula, at the country level.

Croatia is participating in 15 United Nations peacekeeping operations, with female peacekeepers comprising 7 per cent of its personnel. In addition, we are implementing a zero-tolerance policy towards sexual exploitation and abuse in field operations.

Croatia welcomes the fact that the Council's attention was seized with the issue of ensuring stronger accountability mechanisms for the integration of resolution 1325 (2000) into the country-specific and related thematic work of the Council. Croatia would welcome it if the Security Council were to consider establishing a dedicated monitoring mechanism that would increase the Council's contribution to preventing and prosecuting violence against women in armed conflicts.

**The President**: I call on the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Mrs. Booto** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I wish at the outset to convey to you, Sir, our warm congratulations on your effective guidance of the Security Council's work in October. I should especially like to express my delegation's appreciation to the delegation of Ghana for taking the initiative of organizing this meeting on women, peace and security towards an effective and coherent implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which is the subject of today's debate.

My delegation fully endorses the statement made by the representative of Zambia on behalf of the Southern Africa Development Community.

The Beijing Platform for Action highlighted the need to achieve gender equality through systematic national and international gender mainstreaming strategies. The twenty-third special session of the General Assembly allowed us to make a little progress towards gender equality and improving conditions for women.

The implementation of the pioneering resolution 1325 (2000), one aim of which is to integrate the gender dimension into all aspects of peace and security, has important objectives. It will entail, inter alia, establishing institutions capable of ensuring the protection of women and girls and their full participation in national, regional and international mechanisms for the prevention, management and settlement of disputes. The fulfilment of those aims will depend to a large extent on a well-motivated and sustained intervention by Member States, with the active support and cooperation of the United Nations and other partners, including the mobilization and participation of civil society. In that regard, Governments are called on to make the necessary efforts to strengthening women's capacities to contribute fully with their knowledge and skills.

My delegation shares the view already expressed by other delegations that it is also important for the Secretary-General to consider appointing more women as special representatives and envoys to conduct good-offices missions in his name, and to seek to increase the role and contribution of women in United Nations operations on the ground as military observers, civilian police personnel, human rights specialists and members of humanitarian operations. Substantial progress has been achieved, but additional effort must be made to remove the last remaining obstacles to the full implementation of the resolution.

Violence against women and girls remains a major concern, calling for greater effort on the part of the entire international community, because such violence, as a violation of human rights, represents a major obstacle to implementing gender equality. Echoing the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/143 on intensifying efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, which called on Member States and United Nations entities to step up their action to prevent and eliminate such violence. The Security Council replied to that appeal by keeping that issue on its agenda and reaffirming its commitment to implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

During a series of visits to my country, Council members were able to assess the efforts of the new freely and democratically elected Congolese authorities. They had in particular an opportunity to gain an overview of the security situation. My delegation is highly concerned at the moment by the increased and unprecedented violence perpetrated by armed militias in the eastern part of the country. Such acts of violence, particularly sexual violence — systematic attacks on Congolese women and girls — are motivated by the inveterate need of the perpetrators to destroy an entire nation by assaulting the dignity and physical and moral integrity of its women.

Faced with that situation, my country's institutions in implementation of the law on sexual violence adopted by Parliament and enacted by the President of the Republic in 2006, are firmly resolved to crack down on all crimes of sexual violence and will ensure care for the victims. The Head of State himself is determined to come down very hard on the culprits behind such aberrations. He has made security one of his priorities in putting an end to such barbarous acts.

In that respect, support is vital if we are to give the regular forces substantive means of dealing with those armed groups. The militias operate with the financial and political support of foreign actors involved in the looting of our natural resources, which to this very day remains the major factor behind the longevity of the conflict.

Some countries have made systematic rape a weapon of war and have used HIV-infected soldiers in their sordid business of sexual violence against women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. One of the most catastrophic consequences — the transmission of HIV/AIDS — continues to sow desolation in my country. The brutality of such rapes has also caused numerous cases of fistula, entailing the total destruction of the reproductive system. Although it deprives thousands of victims of sexual violence of their vitality and their hope, that scourge does not make front-page headlines.

In that regard, I wish to pay tribute to the First Lady of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mrs. Olive Lembe Kabila, who, as a mother and woman of action, has become directly involved in appealing to the conscience of all in such cases. She has played an active role in the campaign organized by the national programme for reproductive health and is caring for victims of sexual violence, with the support of medical agencies and teams providing pro bono surgery for victims. The campaign has also sought to inform the national community of the existence of that disorder and above all to educate political actors about the disasters caused by armed conflict.

I take this opportunity to recall once again that the Democratic Republic of the Congo attaches special importance to the contribution of women to the promotion of peace and in all areas of life. We vigorously condemn all sexual violence in all armed conflicts, as well as all sexual assault and exploitation committed by any party whatsoever, including United Nations personnel. We stress the need to eradicate impunity. If we are to eliminate this scourge, it is important to take preventative measures and to punish the perpetrators. My delegation therefore supports the zero-tolerance policy adopted by the Secretary-General.

In conclusion, I thank members of the Council for their significant contributions to the efforts to re-establish lasting peace and reconciliation in my country. My delegation hopes that this Security Council debate will contribute to strengthening awareness of the importance of the role of women in maintaining peace and security and in peacebuilding.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Nicaragua.

**Mrs. Rubiales de Chamorro** (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Nicaragua wishes to commend you, Mr. President, the Permanent Representative of the fraternal country of Ghana, for the initiative of holding this open debate in the Security Council. Likewise, I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his report on women and peace and security, which described the achievements in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and the institutional and organizational difficulties that need to be overcome in the next plan of action in order to fulfil that resolution.

Women throughout the ages have played a very important role in the decisions that have changed the course of history. Many of those women have been forgotten, omitted from historical accounts by chroniclers who disregarded their participation in the transformation of ideas and societies. Some years ago, the words "women and peace and security" would only bring to mind women as victims of conflict and the objects of sexual violence. Now, they must be recognized as a decisive factor in peace negotiation processes, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

In Nicaragua, women have held a key role, despite the difficult situation in which they have lived, in the most important decisions that have affected our society. They have been a vital element in the reconciliation of family members and of members of society that fought on opposing sides in the war of foreign aggression. Nicaraguan women have distinguished themselves as leading actors in achieving peace and reconciliation. As companions, mothers, sisters and members of society in general, they have succeeded in moving towards full participation in the decision-making process on projects and programmes that affect their community and their own lives, at all phases of the process, from diagnosis and planning to monitoring and evaluation. That has been a key factor in the successful reconstruction process in our country. That experience proves that it is possible to provide women with the space in which to work to achieve lasting peace and sustainable development.

We are grateful to all the specialized agencies, programmes, funds and entities of the United Nations system involved in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and we urge them to continue to incorporate the gender perspective in all of their activities, so as to ensure that women participate in decision-making processes at all levels on matters of peace and security.

We are exceedingly concerned by the complaints regarding rape in peacekeeping operations, and we would invite all the actors involved to comply with the policy of zero tolerance for acts of sexual exploitation and abuse. We join in the call for an end to be put to impunity. Nicaragua believes that the Secretary-General must continue to step up his efforts to increase the presence of women at all levels in peacekeeping operations, including the highest ranks. We are sure that such measures will help to reduce crimes of a sexual nature.

We urge that more effective measures be considered by both the General Assembly and the Security Council aimed at implementing resolution 1325 (2000). We join in the appeal to the international community to play a leading role in seeking to ensure that women participate in international peace and security processes, while at the same time recognizing that States bear the major responsibility for promoting and implementing national policies that allow for the empowerment of women in that area. Without the inclusion and participation of women in all decision-making processes, we will never attain the international peace and security for which we all yearn.

**Mr. Sow** (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of my delegation, I would like to warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, for the vigour, effectiveness and dedication that you have shown at the head of the Security Council.

The Republic of Guinea is pleased once again to contribute to the collective and multilateral thinking on the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Identifying and assessing progress made in that area in terms of follow-up and empowerment, both nationally and internationally, are at the heart of our concerns.

I must begin by emphasizing that it is at the initiative of the First Lady, the president of the foundation bearing her name, Maman Henriette Conté, that for the first time a national educational campaign was launched on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in Guinea. In fact, on 26 October 2006, the First Lady of the Republic, supported by the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, whom I welcome here, decided to jointly organize, with the Minister for Social Affairs and the Promotion of Women and Children of Guinea, a commemorative day to celebrate, in Conakry, the sixth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) by the Council.

The ceremony had many participants, including members of Government, representatives of national institutions, the Chief of Staff of the army, members of the diplomatic consular corps, representatives of international institutions, non-governmental organizations and civil society. The themes presented and conveyed by public and private media were focused on the content of resolution 1325 (2000) and on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls — women, as victims of conflict and parties who prevent and manage conflict, and in their capacity as protagonists for peacebuilding in Guinea and in the region.

The same day, meetings to sensitize and familiarize political, administrative and religious authorities, the public and concerned partners on issues surrounding the resolution were organized in the five communities of the capital and in the national languages. That political commitment for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) stems from the high degree of responsibility that has always been shown by Guinean women.

Their responsibility was illustrated once again during the tragic events that took place in Guinea in January and February 2007, after the general strike called to put an end to bad governance and poverty. Guinea and all of Africa did not fail, at that time, to welcome the efforts made by women, in particular by the First Lady, to promote dialogue and cooperation among social stakeholders and to take up the serious challenges of peace, security and stability in the country.

Guinea is pleased to have once again found peace, the restoration of the rule of law and improved national cohesion, thanks primarily to the determination of, and sacrifices made by, women.

In that context, we were pleased to receive the second report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the System-wide Plan of Action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We support its major recommendations, in particular those concerning the 2008-2009 Action Plan, conceived as a results-based instrument for programming, follow-up and information. The concentration of future action in the five thematic areas identified in the report cannot fail to ensure the successful establishment of an integrated, coherent strategy for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by all parties involved at the national, regional and international levels.

In conclusion, I wish to renew the commitment of the Government and the women of Guinea to play a leading role in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). I appeal to the international community to provide effective and sustained support to the actions and initiatives undertaken by all concerned in order to increase the mobilization of women and attain their full participation in processes of conflict prevention, peacebuilding and the building of stability in our country and in our subregion.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Malawi.

**Mr. Matenje** (Malawi): Let me begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your delegation's presidency of the Security Council for the month of October 2007. My delegation is grateful to be given the opportunity to address the Security Council during this open debate on the theme, "Women and peace and security: towards a coherent and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)".

We associate ourselves with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Zambia on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC). We would like to add the following remarks.

Given that peace is inextricably linked to equality between men and women, the importance of involving women — in our view the world's most effective peacemakers — in peacekeeping and peacebuilding, cannot be overemphasized. In that regard, we note that resolution 1325 (2000) calls upon Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict.

In Malawi, for example, in support of that call women have been integrated in political and decision-making processes at various levels of Malawian society. Women now occupy prominent positions in the Government and parastatal organizations and have demonstrated themselves to be effective leaders by ensuring that the people of Malawi always remain focused on activities that are aimed at attaining social and economic development for the country. In that regard, women have been instrumental in sustaining the relative peace and security that Malawi has enjoyed since independence in 1964, proving the point that peace does not necessarily mean only the absence of war or armed conflict.

Accordingly, we urge the United Nations to take further deliberate steps to increase the participation of women in the highest-level decision-making positions in peacekeeping operations, conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction.

We believe that the incorporation of a gender perspective in those areas is critical for the achievement of sustainable and lasting peace at both the national and the international levels and for achieving the internationally agreed goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This is even more critical in countries such as Malawi, where the population of women is larger than that of men and where the majority of women are engaged in the agricultural production that drives the economy.

In that regard, we call upon the Security Council to work in coordination with other United Nations bodies, particularly the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council, the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Peacebuilding Commission and others, in seeking measures that would ensure that the MDGs are achieved in full by 2015 in a peaceful and secure environment that is fit for all.

We note with concern from the report of the Secretary-General contained in document S/2007/567 that institutional gaps and challenges such as inadequate funding for gender-related projects and insufficient institutional capacity for gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations have impeded the full implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on women and peace and security for 2005-2007. However, we are confident that those challenges and gaps will be addressed as the United Nations embarks on the implementation of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on women for 2008-2009, which, as we understand it, is a results-based programming, monitoring and reporting tool.

Therefore, we hope that adequate and predictable mechanisms will be introduced to support the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in an efficient, transparent, accountable, coherent and sustainable manner that takes into account the special needs of women and children, particularly in situations of armed conflict. These include putting an end to gender-based violence and degrading and inhumane treatment, which has resulted in millions of women and children in armed-conflict-afflicted areas losing their limbs or their lives. We are particularly appalled by reports of the sexual exploitation of women and children, particularly by the very same people who are entrusted with the responsibility to protect them.

We support the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's report and in that respect underline the importance of establishing a Security Council mechanism to monitor the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the national level. We believe that this would help to address gender-based violence and abuses of human rights and women's rights during conflict and in post-conflict situations.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to reiterate that resolution 1325 (2000) holds out a promise to women and girls around the globe that the international community is ready to protect their rights both in times of peace and in times of war or armed conflict, and to remove all barriers to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace in the world in general and in their own communities in particular. Seven years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the United Nations needs to do more to keep and realize that promise.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Denmark.

**Mr. Faaborg-Andersen** (Denmark): Allow me to begin my statement by thanking the presidency for convening this meeting and thereby once again directing the attention of the Security Council to the indispensable and vital role of women in all efforts to build and maintain peace and security. Furthermore, I would like to associate my delegation with the earlier statement by the Permanent Representative of Portugal on behalf of the European Union.

The report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567) presents an overview of achievements, gaps and challenges, as well as recommendations for further actions to accelerate the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The report concludes that the United Nations system has made significant advances in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). United Nations entities are focused on mainstreaming a gender perspective and human rights in the areas of peace and security. United Nations capacity has been enhanced, advocacy strengthened and partnerships with women's organizations built.

However, the report also confirms the existing institutional and organizational gaps and challenges in the implementation of the resolution. That is regrettable, as implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is as important as ever. Women and girls in conflict and post-conflict situations, wherever they may be, cannot afford delay.

The 2008-2009 Action Plan is conceptualized as a results-based programming, monitoring and reporting tool. We welcome the sharpened focus on the five thematic areas of prevention, protection, participation, relief and recovery and the normative sphere, and thus the shift from project to programme implementation. A broader framework linked to national peace and reconstruction processes is provided. It commits the United Nations system to enhance coherence and to integrate a gender perspective.

Our commitment to results-based programming is deeply felt. We all recognize the importance of guidelines, workshops and gender-inclusive procedures as important stepping stones and important tools for the required capacity development. But at the end of the day it is the results that count. It is the responsibility of the United Nations system, as well as of national Governments, to increase the visibility of the outcome and impact of the initiatives undertaken. Have women and girls on the ground then been able to register improvements? A year ago we regretfully came to the conclusion that we do not really know. This year the answer is the same.

I sincerely hope that next year, we will be able to say that we have achieved increased protection of the rights of women and girls during and after conflict. Our ambition should be to take decisive steps towards fully incorporating a gender perspective in peacekeeping operations, peace negotiations and Security Council missions. We have to come much closer to full and equal participation of women in peace processes at all levels of negotiations and in decision-making.

One of the major lessons learned from the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2005-2007 is that without concerted efforts with Governments and civil society at the country level, the implementation of the resolution will remain elusive. Effective links between the Action Plan and the national implementation efforts are not yet well established and need special attention.

Denmark was one of the very first countries to formulate a national action plan for implementing resolution 1325 (2000), and we are currently in the process of updating and revising the plan. Through a broad and comprehensive approach we are doing so with the full and active involvement of Danish civil society. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence and the National Police in cooperation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other partners are developing a plan with strengthened focus on women's active participation in peacebuilding processes and decision-making at all levels and with strong focus on visibility at the country level.

In our efforts to contribute to the implementation of the resolution, Denmark has found that resolution 1325 (2000) is still little known at the country and grass-roots levels. We urge the Security Council to work on visibility alongside the actual implementation efforts.

Protection of girls and women in conflict situations is still crucial, and involvement of women in peacebuilding processes broadens our perspective on security. We should all like to see more lasting peace agreements. Inclusive processes will make this all the more likely.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

**Mr. Muburi-Muita** (Kenya): Let me join other delegations that have spoken before me in commending you, Sir, for convening today's debate on women and peace and security and also for your excellent leadership in the work of the Security Council for this month of October.

My delegation is cognizant that women are critical agents of change in development, and that investment in them creates a multiplier effect that enriches and accelerates the improvement of their status in society. Kenya affirms the centrality of gender equality in all spheres of life including governance and decision-making, and it recognizes the critical role that women must play in development. As part of Kenya's effort to fully implement this objective, the Government has adopted a national policy on gender development and established a national commission on gender and development. The aim is to integrate women in decision-making through legal, regulatory and institutional reforms.

We must all emphasize the centrality of gender mainstreaming, in particular by including women at all levels of decision-making on peace and security issues, and especially during conflict prevention and resolution processes as well as in post-conflict peacebuilding. Women's perceptions and concerns should form an integral part of any peace process. Women must be participants at the negotiating tables. It is therefore gratifying to note that the United Nations has, over the years and more particularly since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), made significant progress in mainstreaming gender perspectives into peace initiatives. Kenya further encourages this decision and calls for the further involvement of local women in all processes.

My delegation acknowledges that since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), significant progress in its implementation has been achieved by Member States, the United Nations system and civil society. This year's report of the Secretary General (S/2007/567) further demonstrates this encouraging advancement. The progress is slow, however, and more needs to be done to tackle institutional and organizational gaps in the implementation. These include the need for capacity to understand and implement gender mainstreaming programmes, leadership and commitment in implementing the resolution, adequate accountability mechanisms and resources and interagency coordination. In view of this, Kenya welcomes the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report (S/2007/567) aimed at strengthening the implementation of the resolution.

Kenya appreciates that the Department of Peacekeeping Operation has made strides in promoting gender equality in peacekeeping operations and in the incorporation of gender expertise in peacekeeping missions. These have been useful steps, but we still need to ensure sustained efforts in gender mainstreaming at all levels of peacekeeping operations. Currently, Kenya has deployed women to most of the peacekeeping missions where we have troops, and we are determined to increase the numbers.

Resolution 1325 (2000) emphasized the need to incorporate gender perspectives in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding. We are grateful to note that increased attention has been given to the role of women in post-conflict rebuilding processes, especially in the judicial, legislative and electoral sectors, as well as in the restoration of the rule of law and transitional justice. Women still need considerable support and capacity-building to be effective in new democratic and legal structures that have traditionally been dominated by men.

We commend the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for their pivotal roles in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Over the past decade, UNIFEM and UNFPA have been at the forefront of the promotion of the role of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict situations, especially in Africa. However, limitations in funding and resources threaten to undermine this effort. We urge Member States to explore strategies that will ensure the alignment of resources with priorities and ensure adequate and regular funding for activities related to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In conclusion, it is the sincere hope of my delegation that the accountability, monitoring and reporting system will be strengthened to ensure enhanced coordination and implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

**Mr. Urbina** (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by thanking the President for convening this open debate on women and peace and security.

Costa Rica would like to reiterate its commitment to the defence and promotion of human rights of women and girls. It expresses its concern because, in spite of some progress made in this area, the Organization as a whole today is not sufficiently prepared to face the grave challenges that are urgent in this context. The violence against women, especially in situations of armed conflict, has become an endemic problem. For this reason, it should be approached comprehensively with a time-horizon that goes beyond the immediate and with mechanisms that go beyond well-intentioned improvisation.

It is ironic that women are excluded almost completely from the peace processes when it is they who most suffer the consequences of armed conflict. It is they who are the great majority of the refugees and displaced persons; and it is they who are the most likely to be victims of all consequences of wars. I say it is ironic because it is generally recognized that women are agents of change and engines for development. For this reason, Costa Rica would like women to have a major role and effective participation in any decisions taken in areas of conflict prevention and conflict resolution, as well as in the design and implementation of reconstruction and peacebuilding.

There are few situations where the link between peace, security, development and human rights is as clear as in gender-based issues. To ensure progress towards lasting peace and security and towards the effective protection of human rights of all individuals in situations of armed conflict, Costa Rica is convinced that it is necessary to give women effective empowerment. The United Nations should facilitate and promote national activities aimed at that objective.

Furthermore, the multidimensionality of the problems of women and girls in situations of armed conflict requires a systemic approach. In that connection, Costa Rica understands that all United Nations organs and programmes should participate in an active and coordinated manner in efforts to overcome the great challenges in this area. We are concerned at the compartmentalization of issues that, by their very nature, are entirely cross-cutting, as the Secretary-General indicates in his note contained in document A/61/583. For that reason, we consider it imperative to move forward without delay in discussing and taking swift decisions regarding the Organization's gender architecture.

At the same time, Costa Rica believes it is important to strengthen the political commitment of all actors. In that connection, we wish to reaffirm the importance of fulfilling the commitments set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as those made at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, particularly with regard to attaining the six strategic objectives of the Platform for Action pertaining to armed conflict.

We are convinced of the need to support States — particularly those that find themselves in or emerging from a situation of armed conflict — in capacity-building in the areas of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Mindful of that priority consideration, we urge that the 2008-2009 Action Plan be updated to make it a results-based instrument through monitoring and reporting in its thematic areas. We look forward to the assessment of the results of this support tool.

Finally, despite all the challenges still facing us, it is important to highlight and recognize the efforts of the Security Council and of the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system aimed at the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We also welcome supplementary efforts in that regard, with special mention of the work of the International Criminal Court to criminalize sexual and gender-based violence and to protect civilians in armed conflict.

A coordinated, coherent and results-based response that promotes and encourages fulfilment of the commitments made by States over the years is the best way to guarantee that peace, security, sustainable development and respect for human rights will be the pillars supporting the future of our nations.

**The President**: I now call on the representative of Viet Nam.

**Mr. Hoang Chi Trung** (Viet Nam): First of all, permit me, on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation, to thank you, Mr. President, and the delegation of Ghana for taking the initiative to organize this open debate. As a member-elect of the Council, we look forward to working with the other Council members to bring about further progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567).

Alongside basic instruments on gender equality, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) continues to be the guidelines in dealing with the issue of women, peace and security. The Vietnamese delegation is pleased to note that, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General, the work of United Nations entities since the first review of the implementation of the Action Plan, held in 2006, has laid important groundwork for a long-term effort by the United Nations system towards the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Progress has been reported in a wide range of spheres of activities, such as conflict prevention and early warning; peacemaking and peacebuilding; peacekeeping operations; humanitarian response; post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; preventing and responding to gender-based violence in armed conflict; and preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel. However, in the view of my delegation, what is most important of all is the increased political commitment of many entities to gender equality and women's empowerment in peace processes. We would not have seen improved advocacy, enhanced leadership and greater support by senior officials of those entities, as well as their better engagement with Member States and partnership with national mechanisms for women and women's associations and networks — which are all valuable and commendable — without such increased political commitment.

On the one hand, the large number of entities involved points to the potential of the United Nations system to advance our cause. On the other, it shows how great the need is to ensure effective inter-agency coordination. In that connection, in addition to the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, my delegation commends the efforts made by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security.

The report of the Secretary-General points out that, while both the 2006 and 2007 implementation reviews clearly demonstrate progress, they also identify a number of institutional gaps and challenges, as well as the weaknesses of the Action Plan itself. Gender imbalance has not been adequately addressed, leaving women underrepresented in the Secretariat. In some areas, the representation of women has even decreased in comparison with last year. Capacity-building, coordination and cooperation by and among United Nations entities should be improved considerably. On top of that, the issue of adequate and predictable funding requires, as always, undivided attention, if we are to strengthen and further the progress made.

We agree with the Secretary-General that, taken together, those gaps and challenges constitute shortcomings in the capacity of the United Nations system to effectively implement resolution 1325 (2000). With regard to the way forward, the reconceptualization of the 2008-2009 Action Plan is designed to address those gaps and challenges, including in the areas of monitoring and reporting, capacity-building, partnerships and networking, et cetera. The results-based framework for 2008-2009 is being developed to produce concrete and measurable results. We welcome the intention to consolidate all activities by United Nations entities into five thematic areas under the updated 2008-2009 Action Plan. While sharing the hope that that step will help improve both implementation and monitoring, we believe that we should not lose sight of actions aimed at long-term impact, which is sometimes intangible and hard to measure. On another note, we support the proposed establishment of a database on good practices and lessons learned.

Vietnamese women have always played an active role in national defence in times of war and in national construction in times of peace. In Viet Nam today, gender-sensitive legislation, policies, strategies and programmes of action and the network of national mechanisms for the advancement of women all work together for the achievement of gender equality and the advancement of women in all aspects of life —

political, economic and social. In Viet Nam, the cause of the advancement of women and the enhancement of their role enjoys the ongoing support of the country's leadership, and of men. We will continue to support and cooperate with United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and other partners in implementing resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Myanmar.

**Mr. Wai** (Myanmar): Mr. President, I thank you for the opportunity to take part in this open debate on women and peace and security. My delegation identifies with the view that gender equality plays an essential part in promoting and advancing peace and security. We therefore wish to commend the Ghanaian presidency of the Security Council for taking the initiative to hold this open debate. My delegation also wishes to commend the Secretary-General for his report focusing on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We note that the area covered by the report is large and diverse. The implementation review of the 2005-2007 Action Plan provides a good starting point for the way ahead. It shows that progress has been achieved in many substantive areas of the Action Plan. It also confirms the existence of institutional and organizational gaps and challenges in the implementation of the Plan by the United Nations system. We also note that the 2008-2009 Action Plan attempts a sharpened focus. The original 12 areas of action contained in the 2005-2007 Plan have now been reconsolidated into five thematic areas, namely, prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery, and normative initiatives.

In Myanmar's national effort to promote gender equality, organizations such as the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation, the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs Association and the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association play an important role. Hand in hand with these organizations, the Government promotes policies to ensure that the needs and priorities of women and girls are addressed. In this regard, Myanmar's traditions and culture play an important part. Traditional law guarantees the equal rights of women, including the right to own and inherit property.

We subscribe to the view that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Women and girls are the most vulnerable among the population who suffer from conflicts. More often than not the root causes of conflict are poverty and socio-economic and gender inequality. In the case of my country, which has emerged from over four decades of insurgency, the main cause has been weakness of the State constitution that was imposed upon us at the time of independence. Until recently, Myanmar has had to face the challenge posed by 18 insurgent armed groups. However, the Government's policy of national reconciliation has resulted in the return of 17 of these groups to the legal fold.

Today, we are implementing a political road map, the first crucial stage of which is the adoption of a new State constitution that is acceptable to the entire Union, made up of over 100 ethnicities. Recently, we successfully completed a national convention, which laid down the basic principles to be enshrined in the new constitution. On 18 October, the Government formed a commission to draft a new constitution. Once completed, it will be put to a national referendum.

Myanmar's traditions, culture and values, which facilitate our national efforts to promote gender equality, are important pillars in the Government's commitment to protect women and girls from human rights abuses, including sexual and gender-based violence. My delegation therefore takes exception to the allegations of sexual violence levelled against the Myanmar armed forces. In this connection, we categorically reject the unfounded allegations made this morning by the representative of the United Kingdom.

Let me set the record straight. The Myanmar military has been falsely accused of gang rape on the basis of reports issued by the expatriate Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN), the Shan Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) and the Kareni Human Rights Group (KHRG). It should be noted that in 2002, the United States Department of State's country report on Myanmar identified both SHRF and KHRG as organizations that have associations with insurgent armed groups. The allegations levelled at the Myanmar military come from those groups that are associated with the insurgents.

The Security Council has had first-hand experience with reports emanating from exiles that are at variance with reality. Rape, let alone gang rape, is regarded by the Myanmar people and Government as a most dastardly and abhorrent crime. Whenever such a crime is committed, we make sure that the full force of law is applied against the perpetrators. Three separate investigations regarding these allegations have been carried out by the authorities and organizations concerned, including the Myanmar Women's Affairs Federation. In genuine cases, perpetrators were prosecuted and sentenced in accordance with the law.

The report of Secretary-General has rightly pointed out that in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), concerted efforts of Governments and civil societies at the country level are vital for success. We are encouraged that the recommendations to further accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) include the need for the international community to support national implementation. We also look forward to the early establishment of the database of good practices envisaged in the Secretary-General's report. Both the United Nations and its national partners can put to good use the knowledge resulting from the good practices and lessons learned on the implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000).

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

**Mr. Hossain** (Bangladesh): Let me begin by complementing you, Mr. President, for the leadership of Ghana in its stewardship of the Council's deliberations during the current month. I would also like to thank the presidency for its initiative in organizing this open debate on women and peace and security pursuant to the landmark resolution 1325 (2000). It is with a modicum of pride that I recall that Bangladesh, a member of the Council at that time, was closely associated with the resolution's adoption.

Women suffer most as victims of conflict, and in peace processes they are those most deprived of the dividends. Their voices are not fully listened to, or even heard. Today, seven years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we need to reflect further on how best to advance its goal. We need to analyse what constitutes the challenges, and how these challenges can be overcome. We need to ensure adequate representation of women at all levels of decision-making in conflict prevention, during hostilities and through post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. The true measure of women's participation in peace negotiations is not through numbers, but through power in decision-making. It is undeniable that in the consolidation of peace the role of women remains vital.

The Secretary General's report on women and peace and security (S/2007/567) notes some progress in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan 2005-2007. It is our hope that the remaining shortcomings will be addressed in the updated 2008-2009 Action Plan in order to meet the desired goals. The overall experience so far in implementing 1325 (2000) at all levels of decision-making has been mixed.

A number of persistent constraints remain to be addressed. The challenges, particularly at the institutional and organizational levels, have not been dealt with adequately. There is seemingly an inadequate understanding of the gender dimensions in conflict situations. This leads to gaps in the capacity to address various provisions of resolution 1325 (2000). In our view, this largely impedes the implementation of the resolution.

The availability of gender-disaggregated data is particularly important in understanding the situation of women and girls who are victims of war and conflict. A focused examination of issues particularly related to violence against women is also important in formulating policy guidelines. This is an exercise that would assist in undertaking preventive measures. The sharing of experience and good practices and lessons learned on a regular basis are useful not only in sustaining peace but also in guiding policy measures.

Peacekeeping operations are no longer limited to military activities. They now have broader mandates to assist in elections, monitor human rights and carry out police functions. Multidimensional peacekeeping operations thus have large potential in addressing the security of women. We have integrated the gender perspective in some aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations. However, in post-conflict peacebuilding efforts much remains to be done. As one of the largest troop contributors to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Bangladesh is ever conscious of its responsibilities to incorporate essential elements of resolution 1325 (2000) in the predeployment training of peacekeepers. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, we remain vigilant in our focus on the provisions of the resolution. We recommend that all relevant United Nations resolutions should take note of resolution 1325 (2000) and call for its full and effective implementation.

We also recognize that a strong Security Council mechanism is needed to monitor implementation of the resolution. Establishing a working group on women, peace and security may be useful and a good option in this regard. In our view, coordination among various United Nations agencies and their reporting mechanisms should be enhanced in order to implement resolution 1325 (2000) at the grass-roots level. We hope that with the updated Action Plan for 2008-2009, we will succeed in overcoming the weaknesses through concerted efforts. It is our belief that integrating gender perspective across the United Nations system will keep in view geographical, cultural and ethnic factors. Adequate resources should also be mobilized to this effect. Active involvement of the civil society and non-governmental organizations is a sine qua non.

A critical factor in the successful implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is high-level commitment in administration and the establishment of an effective accountability mechanism. Without explicit commitment, the policy guidelines and its programmes and plans are all of very little use. We believe that the protection of women and girls from gender-based violence and abuse is a primary and enduring responsibility. There should be zero tolerance with respect to the perpetrators. Ending impunity is a must. It is crucial to mobilize leadership, secure accountability, provide adequate resources, identify challenges and address root causes in protecting women and girls, in war as well as in peace.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

**Mr. Al-Jarman** (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the United Arab Emirates, I have the honour of thanking you, Sir, for your delegation's fine efforts in the presidency of the Security Council for the month of October, including the initiative to organize today's open debate on the role of women and peace and security.

Seven years have passed since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which established an approach and a clear Action Plan designed to protect of women during armed conflict and to promote of their participation in conflict prevention. However, we are far from achieving the desired objectives in this area, particularly at a time when the reports and statistics from conflict areas are unanimous in the view that women and children are still the principal victims in these conflicts. In most cases, they are the main target of combatants and armed factions and are deliberately subjected to different forms of attack, ethnic cleansing and forced displacement, among other human rights violations.

The United Arab Emirates is following with satisfaction the United Nations Action Plan covering the period 2005-2007 on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), including the achievements in the areas of monitoring, evaluation and accountability. We reiterate that this Plan still needs more evaluation and development in order to address shortcomings, in particular those created by insufficient funding for gender-related projects. Another shortcoming is weak institutional capacity in monitoring and accountability and the universalization of gender perspective.

We strongly condemn the prevalence of all acts of aggression and violence against women and girls in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations. We underscore the need for cooperation between the entities of the United Nations system, in particular the Peacebuilding Commission, for which the United Arab Emirates has provided support. We have contributed to the budget of the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as to those of several organizations, civil society and institutions, relevant governmental and regional non-governmental working groups in order to achieve full implementation of the provisions of this resolution, including the full empowerment of women in the fields of peacekeeping and peacebuilding and the implementation of development and humanitarian operations.

If these goals can be achieved, countries will be helped more effectively to strengthen their respective legislation and training activities aimed at the prevention of gender-based violence in armed conflict, as well as improving the institutional environment for accountability, monitoring and reporting on the situation of women and for ensuring their full and effective participation in political, security and social areas of activity.

We support the efforts made so far to rethink the United Nations Action Plan for the period covering 2008-2009 and transform it from a mere instrument for programming, monitoring and preparing reports to an effective tool that will promote the role of women in the five main thematic areas of prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery and the normative sphere. Nonetheless, we wish to stress the following points.

First, there is a need to fully involve Governments and civil society in the implementation of the Action Plan. This is in addition to giving continuous support and development assistance to countries emerging from conflict so as to help them finance their gender-related and human rights projects and to design and implement comprehensive national plans involving women, thus empowering them fully and effectively, particularly in the fields of peace and security, in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000).

Secondly, we need to adopt the gender perspective in all peacekeeping operations and other relevant activities, including women's increased involvement in decision-making processes so as to mitigate the negative impact of illegal activities perpetrated against them, including acts committed by individuals participating in such activities. We must find innovative ways of training and application in order to facilitate women's participation in elections, government and post-conflict reconstruction efforts, such as those adopted by the World Food Programme.

Thirdly, there is a need to improve mechanisms for the immediate reporting of violations of the human rights of women in areas of armed conflict, including rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Fourthly, we must strengthen national, regional and international legislation to end impunity for those who commit sexual violence against women. We must also endeavour to establish independent and neutral commissions and tribunals to prosecute and punish perpetrators of war crimes and those who commit rape during wartime.

Fifthly, a comprehensive international system must be established to provide information to all Member States and facilitate the exchange of best practices and lessons learned with regard to strengthening the role of women in the area of peace and security.

Sixthly, comprehensive public information and awareness programmes must be developed, especially for countries in conflict or emerging from conflict, in order to promote the full implementation of international humanitarian and human rights law protecting the human rights of women and girls during armed conflict.

The United Arab Emirates has made great strides in empowering women and integrating them in all areas of our society, including in the political, economic and social spheres, as well as in human services and civil defence. We have also endeavoured to participate in peacekeeping operations in many areas of armed conflict, so as to alleviate the suffering of injured and displaced people, the majority of whom are women and children.

The United Arab Emirates would like to express its continuing concern about the dismal situation of victimized women throughout Palestine as a result of the ongoing Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory and its repressive practices against women and their families. A similar situation prevails in Iraq as a result of acts of violence and terrorist bombings. Such acts constitute some of the gravest violations of international humanitarian norms and laws, including the Fourth Geneva Convention, of 1949. We therefore reiterate our call on the international community to shoulder its responsibility in the implementation of all relevant United Nations resolutions. We would also like to underscore that, without the necessary political will, those regions will continue to live in insecurity and instability, which serve to fuel violence against women.

In conclusion, we hope that our debate on this item will lead to the adoption of an integrated international, institutional approach to the issue of women and peace and security in order to make a positive contribution to improving the status of women in today's world.

**The President**: I now give the floor to the representative of Benin.

**Mr. Ehouzou** (Benin) (*spoke in French*): As this is the first time that I am taking the floor in the Security Council this month, I would like, on behalf of my delegation, to warmly congratulate you, Sir, on your country's assumption of the presidency of the Council. Your presence here, Mr. Minister, elevates the level of this debate and attests to the particular interest that the Government of Ghana attaches to this important subject. My delegation is grateful to you for having organized this debate on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which allows us to take stock of the efforts made by the United Nations and the international community to promote the equal participation of women in the resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding and the prevention of conflicts throughout the world. Resolution 1325 (2000) set out well-defined objectives to guide those efforts.

The exhaustive analysis of the Secretary-General contained in his latest report (S/2007/567) allows us to evaluate the significant progress made in gender mainstreaming in the activities covered, as well as in promoting the recovery and development of countries emerging from conflict. However, the report also points to delays in implementing the 2005-2007 Action Plan due to a lack of commitment at certain levels. Institutions that have not yet established action plans in that regard should be encouraged to endeavour to swiftly put such plans in place, in order to ensure the consistent implementation of the resolution in the context of the Action Plan for 2008-2009. We welcome in particular the common policy in the area of gender equality, which is aimed at facilitating the exchange of information on good practices and lessons learned in peacekeeping operations.

The participation of women and the taking into account of women's interests are directly linked to the degree of commitment to their advancement. The more that women are involved in the search for solutions to the problems of our societies, the more the solutions that are found will contribute to promoting their crucial role and to the recognition of the importance of women to the maintenance of peace and security and to the progress of our societies.

Violations of the rights of women are intolerable, as is the physical cruelty from which they continue to suffer. The international community must document and resolutely combat such acts. Efforts to facilitate the identification of ill treatment against women and young girls in armed conflict, and to identify their needs in post-conflict situations, should include the intensification of the fight against impunity for crimes against them. International judicial bodies must be more involved in punishing gender-based violence against women. If national jurisdictions do not address that issue effectively, the International Criminal Court should itself be encouraged to take up cases of large-scale rape and sexual exploitation of women and young girls. We believe that to be an appropriate approach, given the astronomical number of documented victims cited in the report of the Secretary-General.

The establishment of the System-wide Action Plan for 2008-2009 on the basis of lessons learned from the previous Action Plan has made possible the very timely targeting of a more limited number of key thematic areas to serve as points of reference and evaluation of efforts undertaken. The implementation strategies from which the new Action Plan emerged are a good example of the integrated approach called for by the complexity of the issue. By seamlessly linking the development of policies with advocacy, capacity building, working in partnership and networks and the provision of goods and services, that approach clearly underscores the key role of Governments and civil society in expanding the degree to which resolution 1325 (2000) is implemented. It also reflects an acknowledgement of the need to synergize the efforts of various actors with those being made at the regional, national and international levels.

On the whole, we can clearly see from the Secretary-General's report that the United Nations has effectively supported the systematization and institutionalization of its approach to the gender problem. Evidence of that is the establishment of a database; the dissemination of information; the recommendation to establish an integrated knowledge and information management system accessible to Member States; and the strengthening of inter-agency coordination, programming and resource mobilization.

In the light of all this, I am pleased to note that my Government fully agrees with the implementation framework and firmly skews its national policy in favour of the promotion of equality. In that respect, Benin recently adopted a new family code recognizing and promoting the equality of men and women in Beninese society. In order to promote the full enjoyment of women's rights, our Government has chosen to establish positive social discrimination measures to the benefit of women. We are considering the creation of a women's institute that will study policies to develop women's potential. That was, inter alia, one goal behind the introduction in Benin of mandatory and free primary education for all children. The measure was primarily targeted at young girls in rural areas. Benin is also heavily involved in seeking a minimum of 30 per cent of management positions being held by women by 2015.

The implementation of measures to promote gender equality requires the mobilization of major resources and the establishment of considerable operational capacity. That is why I urgently appeal to the international community to mobilize adequate resources to allow a meaningful implementation of the gender approach in the countries involve.

**The President**: After consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security and recalls the relevant statements of its President as reiterating that commitment.
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> "The Security Council reaffirms the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.
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> "The Security Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/CONF.177/20/Rev.1), the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century' (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular the statements in these documents concerning women and peace and security and the Declaration of the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women (E/CN.6/2005/11).
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> "The Security Council recognizes the importance of ensuring the respect for the equal rights of women and, in this regard, reaffirms the importance of the equal role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the need for their full and equal participation in peace processes at all levels. The Council urges Member States, regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations system to enhance the role of women in decision-making with regard to all peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding of societies as vital in all efforts towards the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace and security.
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> "The Security Council is concerned that armed and other types of conflicts still persist in many parts of the world and are an ongoing reality affecting women in nearly every region. In this regard, the Council expresses deep concern that civilians, particularly women and children, continue to account for the vast majority of victims of acts of violence committed by parties to armed conflicts, including as a result of deliberate targeting, indiscriminate and excessive use of force. The Council condemns these acts and demands that those parties immediately put an end to such practices.
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> "The Security Council reaffirms in this regard that parties to armed conflict bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of affected civilians, in particular, giving attention to the specific needs of women and girls.
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> "The Security Council recognizes the constant underrepresentation of women in formal peace processes and is deeply concerned about persistent obstacles and challenges resulting from situations such as violence against women, shattered economies and social structures, lack of rule of law, poverty, limited access to education and other resources, various forms of discrimination and stereotypes.
>
> "The Security Council remains concerned about the low number of women appointed as special representatives or special envoys of the Secretary-General to peace missions. The Council urges the Secretary-General to appoint, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical representation, more women to pursue good offices on his behalf. The Council urges Member States to redouble their efforts to nominate women candidates to the Secretary-General for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster. In turn, the Council calls on the Secretary-General to increase the profile and transparency of this procedure, and issue guidelines to Member States on the process of nomination to senior posts. In addition, the Council reaffirms its call for broader gender

mainstreaming in all peacekeeping operations, and welcomes United Nations peacekeeping operations policies to promote and protect the rights of women and to take into account a gender perspective as set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

"The Security Council takes note of the second follow-up report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security (S/2007/567), and the various initiatives and actions undertaken by the United Nations entities in the context of the United Nations System-wide Action Plan on implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000); calls on the Secretary-General to update, monitor and review the implementation and integration of the Plan; conduct a system-wide evaluation in 2010 of progress achieved in implementing the Plan in 2008-2009; and report thereon to the Council.

"While welcoming the progress achieved so far, the Security Council recognizes the need for full and more effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

"In this regard, the Security Council reiterates its call on Member States to continue to fully and effectively implement resolution 1325 (2000), including, where appropriate, through the development and strengthening of national efforts and capacities, as well as the implementation of national action plans or other relevant national-level strategies.

"The Security Council calls on the international community to provide, where needed, financial and technical support, as well as adequate training, for national implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and on the United Nations system, civil society and other relevant actors to collaborate and provide assistance in line with national priorities of Member States, particularly those affected by armed conflict, in the rapid development of national action plans, and work closely with national mechanisms responsible for the implementation of the resolution, including, where appropriate, through the United Nations country teams. To this end, the Council requests the Secretary-General to include in his annual report to the Council information on progress on measures taken to improve, where appropriate, the capacity of relevant Member States to implement resolution 1325 (2000), including information on best practices.

"The Council emphasizes the importance of strengthening cooperation between Member States as well as the United Nations entities and regional organizations in adopting and promoting regional approaches to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in all its aspects.

"The Security Council strongly condemns all violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, committed against women and girls in situations of armed conflict, including killing, maiming, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse. In this regard, the Council urges the complete cessation by all parties of such acts with immediate effect.

"The Security Council is deeply concerned that despite its repeated condemnation of all acts of violence, including killing, maiming, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse in situations of armed conflict, and despite its calls addressed to all parties to armed conflict for the cessation of such acts with immediate effect, and for the adoption of specific measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape, and other forms of sexual abuse, as well as all other forms of violence, such acts remain pervasive, and in some situations have become systematic and have reached appalling levels of atrocity. The Council stresses the need to end impunity for such acts as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking peace, justice, truth and national reconciliation.

"In this context, the Council reiterates paragraph 9 of resolution 1325 (2000) and calls on all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocols thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocols thereto of 1999 and the United Nations

Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Council on situations of armed conflict information on progress in gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions; data on the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls, including accounts of instances of all forms of violence against women and girls, including killing, maiming, grave sexual violence, abductions and trafficking in persons, committed by the parties to armed conflict; special measures proposed and taken to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape, and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict, in order to end impunity, ensure accountability and uphold a zero-tolerance policy for violence against women and girls.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to prepare a follow-up report on the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), incorporating information on the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls in situations that are on the agenda of the Council, and also information on their protection and on the enhancement of their role in peace processes, to be submitted to the Security Council in October 2008, and may request the Secretary-General to give an oral briefing on the progress of the report.

"The Security Council decides to remain actively seized of this matter."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under symbol S/PRST/2007/40.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

*The meeting rose at 7.10 p.m.*

United Nations

S/PV.5766 (Resumption 1)/Corr.1

*Provisional*

# Security Council

Sixty-second year

## 5766th meeting

Tuesday, 23 October 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

**Corrigendum**

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**Cover page should read**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Mr. Osei-Adjei | (Ghana) |
| *Members:* | Belgium | Mr. Belle |
| | China | Mr. Liu Zhenmin |
| | Congo | Mr. Okio |
| | France | Mr. De Rivière |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Natalegawa |
| | Italy | Mr. Spatafora |
| | Panama | Mr. Suescum |
| | Peru | Ms. Tincopa |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Ansari |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Dolgov |
| | Slovakia | Mr. Burian |
| | South Africa | Ms. Qwabe |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir John Sawers |
| | United States of America | Ms. Wolcott |

## Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

07-56606 (E)

United Nations

S/PV.5766 (Resumption 1)/Corr.1*

# Security Council

Sixty-second year

*Provisional*

## 5766th meeting

Tuesday, 23 October 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

**Corrigendum**

**Cover page should read**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President*: | Mr. Osei-Adjei | (Ghana) |
| *Members*: | Belgium | Mr. Belle |
| | China | Mr. Liu Zhenmin |
| | Congo | Mr. Okio |
| | France | Mr. De Rivière |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Natalegawa |
| | Italy | Mr. Spatafora |
| | Panama | Mr. Suescum |
| | Peru | Ms. Tincopa |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Ansari |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Rogachev |
| | Slovakia | Mr. Burian |
| | South Africa | Ms. Qwabe |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir John Sawers |
| | United States of America | Ms. Wolcott |

## Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2007/567)

Letter dated 8 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Ghana to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2007/598)

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

United Nations S/PV.5767

# Security Council

Sixty-second year

*Provisional*

## 5767th meeting

Wednesday, 24 October 2007, 10 a.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President*: | Mr. Tachie-Menson | (Ghana) |
| *Members*: | Belgium | Mr. Verbeke |
| | China | Mr. Liu Zhenmin |
| | Congo | Mr. Biabaroh-Iboro |
| | France | Mr. Ripert |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Natalegawa |
| | Italy | Mr. Spatafora |
| | Panama | Mr. Arias |
| | Peru | Mr. Voto-Bernales |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Henzab |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Churkin |
| | Slovakia | Mr. Burian |
| | South Africa | Mr. Kumalo |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir John Sawers |
| | United States of America | Mr. Wolff |

## Agenda

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

## Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

## The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

**The President**: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Lynn Pascoe, Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, to whom I give the floor.

**Mr. Pascoe**: The period since the last briefing has seen both Israeli-Palestinian political dialogue and international diplomatic engagement with the Middle East peace process reach their most intensive levels in years. However, there have also been several developments of concern on the ground in the West Bank and a further serious deterioration of the situation in Gaza.

The Quartet offered its strong support for the bilateral talks between Prime Minister Olmert and President Abbas when it met in New York on 23 September. The Quartet also pledged to support a serious and substantive international meeting and to work toward its success and for implementation of its conclusions. The Quartet met with the League of Arab States Follow-up Committee, underscoring the importance it attaches to the Arab Peace Initiative, to regional engagement in the effort underway and to the ultimate goal of a comprehensive regional peace.

President Abbas and Prime Minister Olmert have continued their meetings and tasked their teams, led respectively by former Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Qurei and current Israeli Vice-Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Livni, to work intensively on a framework document for the international meeting. United States Secretary of State Rice visited the region for several days in mid-October to encourage progress and is expected in the region at least twice more in the coming period. I will attend a Quartet envoys meeting soon, as part of the process of consultations in preparation for the international meeting.

On 24 September, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee met and expressed its support for the reform agenda outlined by Prime Minister Fayad, as well as for the efforts of Quartet Representative Blair. It endorsed the establishment of a multi-donor budget funding arrangement and the holding of an inclusive donor conference.

The Palestinian Authority is rapidly developing its Palestinian Reform and Development Plan, which sets out its budget support and reform and investment priorities for the coming three years. The plan will serve as the basis of the Palestinian Authority's funding package for the donor conference, which is planned to take place in Paris in the period after the international meeting and will be jointly chaired by the Governments of France and Norway and the Quartet Representative.

The Palestinian Authority Government has succeeded in paying public sector salaries and anticipates that all arrears will be paid by the end of the year, but a major fiscal gap for 2008 is anticipated and urgent additional donor support will be needed, if crucial salary payments are not to be interrupted once more. The Government has also secured from Israel permits for around 3,400 family reunions in the West Bank — out of a total of 54,000 pending cases. Israel also released a further 86 Palestinian prisoners. We hope that more confidence-building measures will be forthcoming.

The Palestinian Authority Government continues its efforts to improve law and order but faces challenges, including in its plan to deploy 500 Palestinian Authority security personnel into Nablus. We urge the Palestinian Authority to do everything possible on the security front, in accordance with Phase 1 of the Road Map. We welcome initial steps in that regard and strongly encourage Israel and the Palestinian Authority to enhance cooperation on security, freedom of movement and economic rejuvenation, in close cooperation with the Quartet Representative.

According to the Government of Israel, 24 road blocks in the West Bank and one checkpoint have been removed. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, which monitors implementation of the Agreement on Movement and Access, reports that the total number of obstacles to movement currently stands at 562, compared with 563 during the previous reporting period.

Socio-economic conditions in the West Bank remain a source of serious concern. Economic activity and humanitarian operations will be seriously affected by the decision of Israel to further restrict access for West Bank residents — including United Nations staff — to East Jerusalem and to the "seam zone" between the barrier and the Green Line. In addition, the announced intention to reduce the number of crossing points for goods from 12 to six, and the imposition of "back to back" transport procedures and new customs regulations, would, if implemented, significantly increase the cost of transportation of humanitarian supplies and result in possibly unsustainable operational obstacles. The United Nations is actively engaged with the Government of Israel to seek a reconsideration of those measures, in view of their impact on essential humanitarian operations.

Construction of the barrier has continued throughout the reporting period in the occupied Palestinian territory, despite the 2004 advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice. Settlement activity continued this month, despite the Quartet's call for "immediate additional steps to meet previous commitments, including under the Road Map". Settlement activity breaches the Fourth Geneva Convention, prejudges final status issues and undermines the political process. It is also a major factor in determining the extent and character of the closure regime and the route of the barrier and consequent hardship for the Palestinian population. Urgent action on an Israeli settlement freeze and the dismantling of settlement outposts is required as part of a genuine effort to resolve the conflict.

The approval by the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) this month of an order to confiscate almost 300 acres of Palestinian land in and around East Jerusalem is a matter of great concern. The confiscated land would be used to create an alternative road network, linking the northern and southern West Bank and bypassing Jerusalem. Quartet members received a strong complaint from the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) regarding this unacceptable land confiscation, which Palestinians fear would further undermine prospects for territorial contiguity of a future Palestinian State and further cut already heavily restricted Palestinian access to Jerusalem.

The internal Palestinian divide remains. The Palestinian Authority continues to insist that Hamas reverse its measures of the last several months and accept the decisions taken by the President. Hamas continues to reject a return to the status quo ante, while stating that it does not intend its administration of Gaza to be permanent. Hamas has also indicated that it opposes President Abbas's negotiations with Prime Minister Olmert and the international meeting in the absence of an internal Palestinian consensus.

In Gaza, Hamas continues to confiscate weapons and vehicles of clans and rival factions, which sometimes leads to heavy clashes between Hamas forces and forces of other factions or clans. It has appointed personnel to key parts of the administrative apparatus, and it is imposing taxes on smuggled goods. Hamas's efforts to assert military and administrative control over the Strip are accompanied by allegations of human rights abuses. Allegations of abuses have also been made against Palestinian Authority forces in the West Bank. Four Palestinians have been killed and 69 injured in Palestinian violence, mostly in Gaza.

Twenty-seven rockets and 90 mortars were fired by militants in Gaza — some at crossings, others at Israeli civilian population centres. On 7 October, for the first time in over a year, a standard Grad rocket was fired from Gaza, at the city of Netivot. The Government of Israel has stated to the United Nations that weapons continue to be smuggled into Gaza. IDF raids and incursions into West Bank cities have continued, leading to casualties. The IDF claims it has foiled attacks against Israel during the reporting period.

In Israeli-Palestinian violence, 31 Palestinians, including one child, have been killed, and 153 have been injured, including 26 children, while one Israeli has been killed and six injured. Two hundred Palestinians have been detained by the IDF. One of the approximately 11,000 Palestinian prisoners remaining in Israeli jails died after injuries sustained when prison guards put down a prison riot in circumstances that are not yet clear. IDF Corporal Gilad Shalit is in his seventeenth month of captivity in Gaza.

The Secretary-General continues to condemn all acts of terrorism, as well as all military acts which target, endanger or harm civilians, because of their disproportionate or indiscriminate character.

Members of the Council will recall Israel's decision last month to designate Gaza a hostile territory, to restrict the passage of goods, to reduce the supply of fuel and electricity and to place new restrictions on movement of people to and from the Gaza Strip. The Secretary-General expressed his deep concern at this decision and called on Israel to reconsider it, warning against any measures of punishment of the population.

While the Israeli cabinet decision stated that Israel would take into account "both the humanitarian aspects ... and the intention to avoid a humanitarian crisis", the humanitarian situation in Gaza is deteriorating alarmingly. In June and July, approximately 100 truckloads of humanitarian goods were entering Gaza daily; today, the number is approximately 50. Reversing a previous trend, food prices have jumped by almost 10 per cent in two months, even as poverty levels increase. Many businesses and tens of thousands of workers have lost income with the loss of materials and markets due to closures.

In July, an average of 40 critical medical cases a day crossed Erez into Israel for essential medical treatment unavailable in Gaza; in the last month, the daily average was five. According to Human Rights Watch, at least three patients that were denied exit permits have died since June, and others have lost limbs or sight due to untreated injuries and disease. Hospitals in Gaza briefly ceased conducting operations in recent days citing a lack of nitrous oxide.

Over 1,000 Palestinians remain stranded in Egypt, unable to cross into Gaza with the closure of Rafah for over four months. Over 7,000 Gaza Palestinians who study or work abroad have not been allowed to leave the Strip. Cash transfers from banks in the West Bank will be subject to new restrictions.

We are also concerned that one of the two crossings that remain open for humanitarian goods, Sufa, is slated to be closed towards the end of this month. Since mid-June, 5,936 trucks have gone through Sufa, compared with 1,654 through Kerem Shalom, the crossing that will remain open. While it has been upgraded, Kerem Shalom is unlikely to have the capacity to process the number of trucks required to meet the humanitarian needs of the population of Gaza.

It is difficult to see how security concerns can justify the hardship that these measures are causing. I repeat the Secretary-General's strong injunction against the punishing of the civilian population of the Gaza Strip. We also reiterate the Quartet's urgent concern about the continued closure of Gaza and its calls for continued emergency and humanitarian assistance without obstruction and the provision of essential services.

I turn to the situation in Lebanon, which is currently in the midst of presidential elections. On 25 September Speaker Berri attempted to convene parliament for a vote on a new president. The session never opened, however, due to a lack of quorum. The same day, Speaker Berri issued a call to convene parliament for a vote on the president on 23 October. However, on 22 October he postponed the scheduled session until 12 November. The election of a new president is an important milestone in reasserting Lebanon's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and political independence. It is essential that the new president be elected in accordance with the constitutional timeframe and procedures and without foreign interference.

The situation within Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon remains precarious, with occasional armed clashes between Palestinian militias. Most recently, on 3 October, two people were wounded in night-time gunfire between armed supporters of Fatah and those of Hamas in the Miyah Miyah refugee camp near Sidon. Tangible improvements in living conditions inside these camps are urgently needed, given the obvious connection to the wider security situation in Lebanon. The United Nations family stands ready to work with our Lebanese and Palestinian partners towards this goal.

The United Nations country team in Lebanon is actively engaged in supporting the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East efforts to implement an emergency return plan funded by a new flash appeal launched jointly with the Prime Minister and the World Bank at a donor meeting held in Beirut on 10 September 2007. I urge donors to continue to provide vital financial assistance for urgent humanitarian needs and for the reconstruction of the camp.

During the reporting period, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) reported 142 overflights of Lebanese territory by Israeli planes and unmanned aerial vehicles. These overflights occurred on an almost daily basis. Some of them were at a low altitude, breaking the sound barrier in populated areas in southern Lebanon. Overflights not only constitute serious violations of Security Council resolutions, but they also undermine the credibility of both UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces in the eyes of the local population and damage efforts to reduce tension, build confidence and stabilize the situation in southern Lebanon. At the same time, Israel continues to state that its air violations are to counter other breaches of resolution 1701 (2006), including violations of the arms embargo.

The Secretary-General has asked me to convey to the Council his strong backing of the current diplomatic efforts. He remains committed to the creation of an independent and viable Palestinian State living side by side in peace with Israel, and a comprehensive peace in the region, in accordance with Security Council resolutions, the Road Map and the Arab Peace Initiative.

To this end, the Secretary-General hopes for an international meeting that deals with the substance of permanent peace, has broad Arab participation, produces results that positively affect the lives of Israelis and Palestinians and leads to a serious follow-on process. He therefore encourages the parties to be bold in reaching understandings on core issues and on a clear process following the international meeting. And he calls for urgent efforts by the parties to build confidence and to improve the situation on the ground by taking further steps in accordance with the Agreement on Movement and Access and Phase I of the Road Map. All of the relevant international actors should help the parties take such steps. A failure of this process would be a major setback with wide-ranging consequences.

The Secretary-General remains deeply concerned for the welfare of the civilian population of Gaza and reiterates the commitment of the entire United Nations system to do its part to meet their needs. The Secretary-General regrets the continued division of the occupied Palestinian territory and fears that that will become harder to overcome the longer it is left unaddressed. He hopes that the concerned parties and regional and international players will address the situation in Gaza with wisdom, foresight and a sense of responsibility.

Finally, I would like to inform the Council that the Deputy Special Coordinator and Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Kevin Kennedy, resigned from the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process (UNSCO) at the end of last month. On behalf of the Secretary-General, I thank Mr. Kennedy for his outstanding contribution to the work of UNSCO and the entire United Nations system on the ground, which was the culmination of a distinguished career leading United Nations efforts in many complex emergencies and supporting those efforts in senior leadership positions at Headquarters. He is sorely missed, and we wish him well. The Secretary-General is moving quickly to fill both the Special Coordinator and Deputy positions. He will ensure that, pending long-term appointments, arrangements are in place for leadership of the United Nations country team at this critical time.

**The President**: I thank Mr. Pascoe for his briefing.

In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion of the subject.

*The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.*

United Nations S/PV.5768

# Security Council

Sixty-second year

*Provisional*

## 5768th meeting

Wednesday, 24 October 2007, 6.30 p.m.
New York

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *President:* | Mr. Christian | (Ghana) |
| *Members:* | Belgium | Mr. Dhaene |
| | China | Mr. Liu Zhenmin |
| | Congo | Mr. Okio |
| | France | Mr. De Rivière |
| | Indonesia | Mr. Natalegawa |
| | Italy | Mr. Azzarello |
| | Panama | Mr. Suescum |
| | Peru | Mr. Voto-Bernales |
| | Qatar | Mr. Al-Ansari |
| | Russian Federation | Mr. Dolgov |
| | Slovakia | Mr. Burian |
| | South Africa | Ms. Qwabe |
| | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | Sir John Sawers |
| | United States of America | Ms. Wolcott |

## Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the *Official Records of the Security Council*. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A.

*The meeting was called to order at 6.30 p.m.*

**Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

**Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan**

**The President**: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Following consultations among the members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

> "The Security Council stresses the urgent need for an inclusive and sustainable political settlement in Darfur and strongly welcomes, in this regard, the convening of peace talks on 27 October in Sirte, under the leadership of United Nations Special Envoy Mr. Jan Eliasson and African Union Special Envoy Dr. Salim Salim, who have the Council's full support.
>
> "The Security Council expresses its strong concern at the continuing deterioration in the security and humanitarian situation in Darfur and urges all parties to exercise restraint immediately, avoiding retaliation and escalation.
>
> "The Security Council calls on all parties to attend and to engage fully and constructively in the talks, and, as a first step, to urgently agree and implement a cessation of hostilities to be overseen by the United Nations and the African Union. The Council underlines its willingness to take action against any party that seeks to undermine the peace process, including by failing to respect such a cessation of hostilities or by impeding the talks, peacekeeping or humanitarian aid. The Council also recognizes that due process must take its course.
>
> "The Security Council underlines that an inclusive political settlement and the successful deployment of UNAMID are essential for re-establishing peace and stability in Darfur. The Council expresses its deep concern at the delays in deploying UNAMID. The Council calls, in this regard, for Member States to urgently make available the aviation and ground transport units still required for UNAMID and for all parties to facilitate and expedite UNAMID's effective deployment.
>
> "The Security Council requests the Secretary-General, in his regular 30-day reports to the Council on UNAMID, to also report on progress being made on, and any obstacles to, the political process and the situation on the ground."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2007/41.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on the agenda.

*The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.*